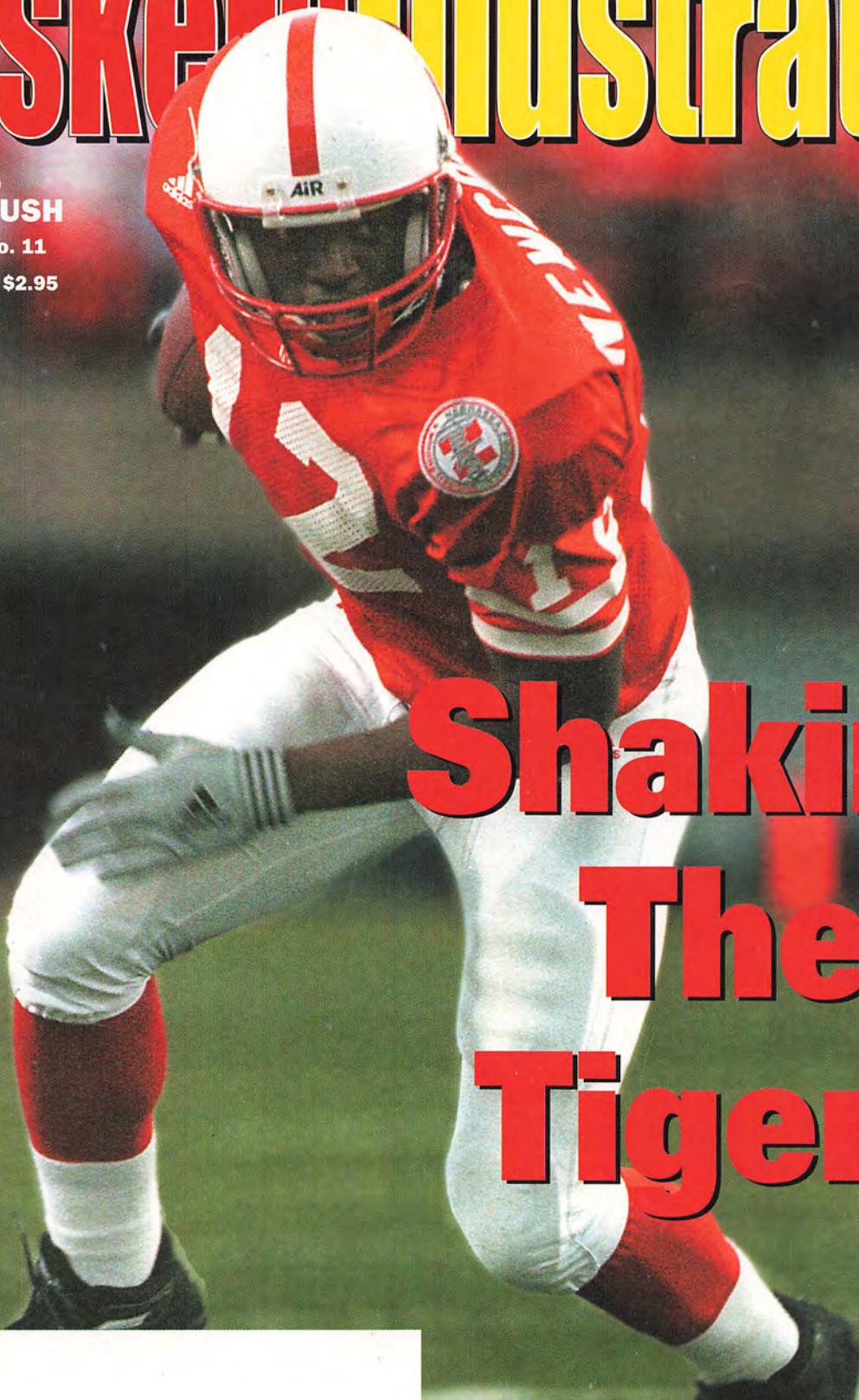


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# FROM THE EDITOR

## Not Another Easy One

**After 492 yards and 24 points,  
there's still a lot of work to do**



**Brian  
HILL**

I WAS REMINDED late Saturday night that I picked Nebraska to score 72 points against Missouri. It had something to do with Clemson scoring 62 against Mizzou earlier this season and assuming that the Nebraska offense could do better. The prediction was not scientific, and, obviously, the margin of error was pretty great.

I was much closer on Missouri's score, guessing the Tigers would score 20 points (they had 24). I expected a late score or two against Nebraska's lower units once the game was out of hand. I certainly didn't expect the Blackshirts to give up 492 yards of total offense to a team picked to finish last in the Big 12 North.

Seeing Missouri break big play after big play brought back memories of the NU-MU game in 1978, when James Wilder erupted for 181 yards and four touchdowns and joined Kellen Winslow, Phil Bradley and Co. in upsetting the Huskers 35-31 in Lincoln.

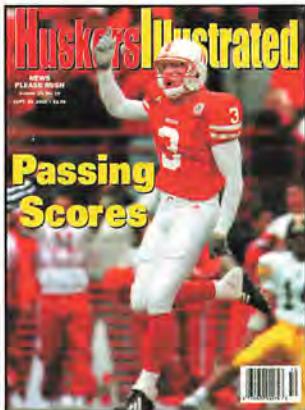
That was the last time Missouri had beaten Nebraska. You didn't really get the feeling that an upset was imminent this time around, but the lead was just a touchdown (28-21) with 9:09 remaining in the third quarter, before Jamie Burrow's 28-yard fumble return gave the Huskers some breathing room.

That big play was one of the few bright spots for the defense, which did not record a sack and allowed 20 plays that gained 10 yards or more.

Sure, Missouri had an open week to prepare for Nebraska, and the Huskers were missing Loran Kaiser for most of the

### ON THE COVER

Bobby Newcombe breathed life into the Nebraska return game with a school-record 94-yard punt return for a touchdown in the first half. Photo by Scott Bruhn



game and Carlos Polk for part of it. But if sophomore Kirk Farmer can riddle this NU defense for 214 passing yards and 83 rushing yards, you have to be concerned about Oklahoma's Josh Heupel and Kansas State's Jonathan Beasley . . . and possibly others.

It's quite possible that too much was expected out of a defense that lost six starters, including All-Americans Mike Brown and Ralph Brown. The Huskers really miss nose tackle Steve Warren, who had a great senior season and was the team leader in tackles for loss and sacks.

That said, it's certainly not time to give up on this defense and the team's chances for a Big 12 and national championship.

Maybe the Blackshirts just needed a wakeup call, and they'll put it all together before the stretch run. The next game should provide a good test. Iowa State's Sage Rosenfels is an experienced and solid quarterback, and the Cyclones have junior tailback Ennis Haywood, who has rushed for 615 yards.

You'll find out more about unbeaten Iowa State, which is off to its best start in 20 years, in this magazine. You'll also find a look at the

Nebraska secondary and a profile of cornerback Keyuo Craver. Contributing editor Mike Babcock has a good look at senior wingback Bobby Newcombe in "State of the Huskers."

And relax. Last year at this time, everyone was worried about fumbles. After four games in 1999, the Huskers had put the ball on the ground 16 times and lost 7. This year's comparable numbers are 5 and 1.

Things have a way of getting better. ■

### Got Something To Say?

Please send your comments and questions to: Letters, 3210 NW 3rd St., Lincoln, Neb. 68521. You can also fax them to us at (402) 474-5132. We reserve the right to edit the letters for clarity, content and length. For those with electronic mail abilities, [Hleditor@aol.com](mailto:Hleditor@aol.com).

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# Huskers Illustrated

EDITOR,  
GENERAL MANAGER  
Brian Hill

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR  
Mike Babcock

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
Mark Derowitsch, James Hale,  
Steve Sipple, Curt McKeever,  
Bob Schaller, Todd Henrichs,  
Nebraska Sports Information

CONTRIBUTING  
PHOTOGRAPHERS  
Scott Bruhn, Nebraska  
Sports Information

SPORTS MARKETING  
& ADVERTISING DIRECTOR  
Jeff Tuder

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR  
G Associates Inc.

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**I-800-524-9527**

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**HI Online**

<http://www.huskersillustrated.com>

**E-Mail Addresses**

Editor: [Hleditor@aol.com](mailto:Hleditor@aol.com)

Advertising/marketing: [jtuder@navix.net](mailto:jtuder@navix.net)

# Huskers Illustrated

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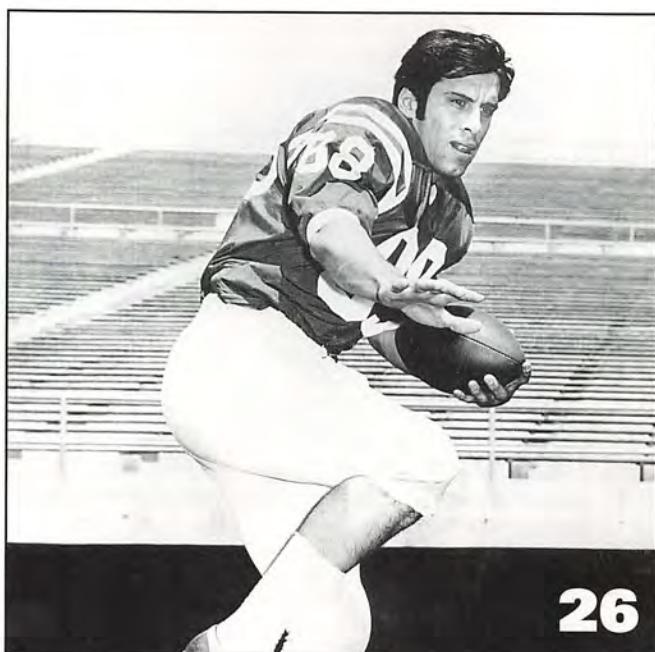
While focusing on the present, longtime Nebraska secondary coach George Darlington takes a look at the future. *By Mike Babcock*

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# Inexact Science

Recruiting is an inexact science. If you don't think so, consider the recruitment of Nebraska sophomore Toniu Fonoti. If not for a phone call from Fonoti's mom to assistant coach George Darlington, the Cornhuskers probably would have missed out on the 6-foot-4, 340-pound guard.

That's according to offensive line coach Milt Tenopir, anyway.

"We were fairly late in evaluating him," Tenopir said of Fonoti's recruitment. "For some reason, somebody had overlooked him during the spring. Whether it was an undergrad (assistant), a grad assistant or whoever that was looking at tape (of him), they had really turned him down. So he wasn't on any of our lists until well into the recruiting process, early December or thereabouts."

Fonoti was put on the "A list" soon after his mom contacted Darlington to see what Nebraska thought about her son. Darlington's recruiting area includes Hawaii, where Fonoti is from.

Darlington was unprepared for the call and "kind of stumbled around a little bit because he thought we had evaluated him (Fonoti) and had put him in the discard file," said Tenopir.

"George had me get the tape out, and we re-looked at it."

Tenopir was immediately impressed. Fonoti was "pretty special on the tape. The first half of it, he must have had at least a dozen (plays) where he knocked people on the ground," Tenopir said.

"He did some unbelievable things on



**Toniu Fonoti**

the high school tape. The thing I liked about him was, it didn't make a difference who he was playing against, he was going to splatter them.

"Sometimes you watch a big kid and he doesn't have to work so hard because he's so much better than the other guy and you don't see the effort. But you saw that in watching Toniu on tape. He actually knocked them off their feet. And he's doing some of that right now."

Because Nebraska was late in aggressively recruiting Fonoti, "I thought maybe we had botched it," said Tenopir.

"He was a pretty heavily recruited

young man."

"It looked like it was going to be a fight with us and Arizona. And right at the end, he told his mom and dad he thought Nebraska wanted him more, that we paid him more attention."

The Huskers also told him he wouldn't have to sit out a redshirt season as a freshman, an extremely rare situation, particularly for an offensive lineman.

Fonoti was only the third true freshman to play regularly in Nebraska's offensive line. The others were Will Shields and Jake Young, both of whom earned All-America honors.

Center John Garrison also played as a true freshman last season, but he remained with the varsity because of his ability as a deep-snapper and was not a regular in the rotation.

The Cornhuskers rarely if ever indicate to incoming freshmen that they will play without redshirting. At least that has been the official stance. But "we told him (Fonoti) during the recruiting process," Tenopir said. "Part of it was by necessity. We felt that we needed some depth."

"We had a couple of kids that hadn't come along quite like we thought they should. And with his physical tools, we told him we would keep him with us and bring him along as quickly as we could."

Fonoti played in every game last season, which "culminated with 35 or 36 snaps against Tennessee in the bowl game," said Tenopir. "And he graded as well as anybody graded."

The coaches weren't the only ones impressed by the high school videotape of Fonoti. Senior offensive tackle Jason Schwab also was struck immediately by Fonoti's size and ability.

"Schwabbie likes to look at all of the recruits each year," Tenopir said.

Schwab stopped by his office one day when he was watching tape of Fonoti. After seeing the tape, Schwab took it upon himself to bring other linemen to the office to see the tape.

"Schwabbie had them all convinced that he (Fonoti) was something," said Tenopir.

And Fonoti is. "He's a pretty special kid," Tenopir said. "They all are. And they're all playing well. They all have a tremendous temperament, and they're really mobile for as big as they are."

Fonoti, the biggest of the bunch, "is getting better every day," said Tenopir.

"He's got a chance to be awful good before he leaves here."

And he's only 18-years-old. He won't celebrate his 19th birthday until Nov. 26. ■



## Opposite Sides

Former Husker teammates Sheldon Jackson (88) of Buffalo and Scott Frost (47) of the New York Jets share a moment after the Jets' 27-14 victory Sept. 17 at East Rutherford, N.J. Frost intercepted a pass to help seal the Jets' win. Jackson had one catch for 8 yards.

Photo contributed by Jim Stewart, Old Bridge, N.J.

## EMPATHETIC CROUCH

Quarterback Eric Crouch has a unique insight into what Texas quarterbacks Major Applewhite and Chris Simms have been going through in their competition for the starting job.

"I remember going through all that," said Crouch, who competed with Bobby Newcombe for the starting job through preseason practice a year ago. "I've got sympathy for them."

I went through that as a (redshirted) freshman and I went through that as a sophomore for a while, a couple of games. It's tough. But it does build character. I know that for a fact.



Eric Crouch

"You don't really know for sure if the coaches believe in you, if they believe in the other guy or if they believe in both of you. Not knowing if you're going to start, if you're going to be told . . . it was Saturday morning before the game before we (he and Newcombe) even knew.

"I remember barely sleeping through the night, wondering what the heck was going to go on."

## COAST TO COAST

Crouch has become something of a national celebrity this season. Among other things, he has made an appearance on the syndicated Jim Rome radio show, and he was the focus of Sports Illustrated's story following the Notre Dame game. After the issue of Sports Illustrated hit the newsstands, "I had a friend call me from California and one call from New York," he said. "So it's coast to coast.

"It's kind of amazing to see coverage of yourself across the nation. But it comes with the territory, being ranked No. 1 and beating a great program (Notre Dame's) at home.

"You knew it was going to be like that because of the week of the game."

Crouch said he hasn't been affected by all of the attention.

But "sometimes it can be hard," he said. "I've looked at some players in the past, of certain teams, and some of that stuff can get to their head and can make them start thinking about awards or things that can help them out as far as individual things. I hear it, but it kind of goes in one ear and out the other."

"That's always how I've been about it. I've stayed levelheaded and just kind of play my game. I go out there and enjoy myself. If you let that get to you and you don't focus on the sport and actually play football — the things you can control — then sometimes that can hurt you." ■

# Quick Hits

## What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

### WHO'S NO. 4?

Even though he has continued to share the fourth position at I-back on the depth chart, DeAntae Grixby has separated himself from Josh Davis and Thunder Collins.

Coach Frank Solich has indicated that the top three I-backs are clear-cut: Dan Alexander, Correll Buckhalter and Dahrran Diedrick. And now Grixby has solidified his position at No. 4.

"DeAntae's shown us enough that we'd be very comfortable with him if he had to line up and take some snaps in a tight game," Solich said of the redshirted freshman from Omaha.

"He has excellent running instincts. He gets yards after contact, even though he's not as big of a back as the guys in front of him. But he has the ability to make people miss."

The 5-foot-8, 200-pound Grixby also "can make a big play for you," said Solich.

### MULTI-PURPOSE LINEMAN

Jon Rutherford's versatility has made him a valuable back-up in the offensive line. The 6-foot-3, 300-pound junior from Midwest City, Okla., has been listed on the second team at both guard positions and center, and he was the No. 1 back-up at tackle for the Iowa game.

"He's pretty valuable to us," Solich said.

Rutherford's switch from guard to tackle has been facilitated by the continued improvement of Jon Dawson at guard. The 6-foot-2, 280-pound redshirted freshman from Cheyenne, Wyo., who resembles former Cornhusker Dave Rimington, "appears to be coming along fine there," said Solich.

### SURVIVOR

Perhaps the most difficult part of playing cornerback is knowing when you make a mistake, everyone in the stadium is aware of it. "You're on an island," said sophomore cornerback DeJuan Groce.

"Sometimes you kind of dwell on it. My freshman year, I kind of dwelled on it at practice. 'I can't believe I did that.' It would bug me the next day sometimes. 'It's not going to happen today.'

If you're a defensive back and you can't deal with such public mistakes, "you're going to have a lot of trouble," Groce said. "A lot of trouble. You're going to be lost."

If you can't let mistakes go, "you're going to keep sinking like the Titanic," he said.

### FRESH OUT OF A REDSHIRT

Even though true freshman Benard Thomas didn't play until the third game of the season against Iowa, he knew that he might not redshirt, according to rush ends coach Nelson Barnes.

"We told him when he came here we would be evaluating him, starting with two-a-days, and as soon as we felt like he could make a contribution or felt like he was ready to make a contribution, we were going to try to play him," said Barnes. "I think it's the same way with all the freshmen."

"We don't rule anyone out and say that automatically you're going to redshirt."

There was no particular time frame for making the decision to redshirt or not to redshirt.

"I don't know whether how long into the season makes that decision," Barnes said. "Ideally, you'd like to know as soon as you can get a guy out there if you're going to play him."

"Nowadays with the number of scholarships that you have, it's really getting harder and harder, I think, to redshirt people if they're ready to make a contribution. Some guys come in and they're not quite ready to make a contribution. But I think in this situation, Benard has showed he can do some things that could help this team win. So what's what we want to do, try to give him a chance to do that." ■

# The Hard Thing Is Letting Go

**Complex Newcombe  
shatters stereotype**



**Mike  
BABCOCK**

THE INTERVIEW was punctuated with uncomfortable silences.

Bobby Newcombe carefully considered each question, then answered it or not, depending on whether he understood what was being asked. His answers were thoughtful, often to the point of philosophical, lending credence to team psychologist Jack Stark's unsolicited observation that Nebraska's senior wingback is the "deepest" football player with whom he has ever worked.

Newcombe speaks several languages, including Arabic and Mende — the language of his African mother. He studies philosophy and religion. And he plays the violin and piano.

Not all of his considerable energy finds an outlet on the football field. "That's why I have these interests in other areas," Newcombe said, after brief reflection.

"A lot of times, there's a lot (of energy) left over after a game or a practice."

That's especially been the case, you get the sense, since Newcombe moved from quarterback to wingback two games into last season. But then, he didn't really say that in so many words, and to make such assumptions is to risk misunderstanding him. He is, as Stark noted, complex.

He also is playing his final season at Nebraska as a graduate student, after completing a degree in business administration in just three years. That singular accomplishment shatters a longstanding stereotype with which he and many other conscientious student-athletes must deal.

Newcombe's classroom experience hasn't been easy. Instructors haven't allowed him to slide by because he's an athlete. Quite the contrary. Many have been tougher.

It has been a matter of perception, "and this is not coming from just me thinking it," said Newcombe. "People have told me they think I'm just an athlete, a black male athlete, and that I'm going to sit in the back, not participate in class, not get involved in anything, not do the work, just get by."

"There have been classes where I was there maybe for a week or so and felt so uncomfortable, maybe because of the attitude I got from the professor, that I dropped the class. There hasn't been a class that I've felt 100 percent comfortable in at all, except now because it's one on one."

Graduate study can be much more individualized.

Newcombe's personality — or at least his public persona — has changed dramatically since he arrived at Nebraska in the summer of 1997, a highly publicized scholarship recruit from Albuquerque, N.M., eager to play quarterback for the Cornhuskers, and to please anyone requesting an interview. He seemed more easy-going then, more prone to have a smile on his face. He wasn't necessarily naïve. But "my eyes are a lot more open now. I see a lot more things," he said.

"You only see and hear what you want to see and hear. When I was a freshman, I paid attention to a lot of things. But at the same time, I missed a lot of things, too. I don't miss as many things now. Sometimes I pick up on things that I wish I didn't."

Those things are in all aspects of his life, "football, college, watching the news. There are a lot of things you see that you don't like, but you can't do anything about them. So you have to accept the fact that you can't do anything. That's the hard thing, letting go of things you can't do anything about."

"In high school, when you wanted to see something happen for you, you worked hard and the majority of the time it would happen for you." That's not always the case now.

It's true, to some degree, of Newcombe's situation on the football team.

Fans, and even some reporters, continue to call for Newcombe to get more "touches." Even though he is an exceptionally talented receiver and kick returner, with demonstrated big-play potential, such a call begs the question: To what end does he need more touches?

The Cornhusker offense has been fairly productive so far.

Nevertheless, Newcombe's supporters have persisted, in tribute to his ability. When he does touch the ball in games at Memorial Stadium, the excitement is noticeably heightened.

Newcombe hears the call. But "that's one of those things I just have to let go of because I can't do anything about it," he said. "I have to adapt the ability I have, the gifts that I have, to other areas, running the play and doing the

best I can whether I have the ball or not. If the ball's not going to be thrown to me, I'm going to try to run the best route I can. I really try to concentrate on route running."

He hopes to play in the National Football League a year from now, an aspiration he shares with many of his teammates. But he's certainly not limited in his career options.

He is aware of the odds against a lengthy pro football career, even for someone with his athletic skills. And "I'm comfortable with that," he said. "My mind is full of goals and dreams."

"I sit at home and dream of myself doing many things. My dad always tells me, why can't you? You should be able to if you put your mind to it. And I have taken that to another level."

"I think if I put my mind to anything, I can do it."

Newcombe is introspective, a quality that can be mistaken for sullenness or aloofness. "I'm not a person that believes something just because somebody tells me to believe it," he said.

He's also not a person who answers questions just because someone asks them.

That's a good life skill. But it's one that can sometimes make reporters uneasy. ■



**Bobby Newcombe is playing his final season as a graduate student.**

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# Turning A Negative Into A Positive

**Cornerback Swiney kept his focus while recovering from injury**



**Bob  
SCHALLER**

FIRST, HE REGAINED HIS HEALTH, something that was Erwin Swiney's goal as he sat out all of last season with an injury.

But he also gained something else, something he hadn't been looking for but was nonetheless very happy to find . . . perspective.

"He's worked so hard, and he's very hungry," said Nebraska assistant coach George Darlington. "He really made the most of the year he wasn't (able to play). That says a lot about him."

The opener this season was the hardest for Swiney — hard to contain himself, at least. It was like sitting at the starting line for a year with a full tank of gas, wanting to burn it all on a half-mile race track.

As he wrestled with and pushed at a San Jose State receiver, Swiney heard a voice calling his name.

And he recognized the tone.

"Coach (Frank) Solich," Swiney said, "and he was not happy."

No, he wasn't. In fact, Solich sounded and looked just as he did when he went after Dominic Raiola early last season for a mental mistake. Swiney was in danger of getting a personal foul. He didn't, though last year Raiola did. But Swiney did something more unforgivable. By losing his focus, he didn't call a timeout as the coaches had instructed.

"That's what they were so mad about," Swiney said. "I was banging on that guy, and I didn't call 'time.'"

But it was a good noise for Swiney to hear because last year the silence was deafening.

"At that point," Darlington said, "he was just very, very excited to be back on the field."

He never wavered from wanting to join the Huskers, as a senior at Lincoln Northeast High. He and Matt Davison were the high school all-state receivers in 1996. In fact, to that point, Swiney had played just two years of football, after moving to Lincoln in 1994, from Dallas. Though Notre Dame, Kansas, Kansas State, Wyoming and Colorado recruited Swiney, he took no visits other than the one across town to the University of Nebraska.

As a true freshman, Swiney started for the Huskers, playing opposite cornerback Ralph Brown, as Nebraska won the national championship in 1997.

Though it's rare to see a starter in the secondary as a true freshman — Brown was one of the others — Swiney had laid the groundwork long before. In high school, he was a track star, qualifying for state in the 100, 200, long jump and a relay. At the state powerlifting meet, Swiney did a very Husker-like 415 pounds in the squat and benched 275 pounds.

That freshman year, Swiney bumped Jerome Peterson out

of his starting spot and ended up starting nine games, coming up with 13 solo tackles (24 total).

Though he missed all of spring ball with the groin/lower abdominal injury — one that had bothered him since back in high school — Swiney's sophomore year was even better. He was fifth on the team in tackles with 61 total (32 solo) and 13 pass breakups, which was tied for third all-time in a single season at Nebraska. But after that strong season, Swiney was forced to sit out with a sports injury in his pelvic area. The injury has plagued the Huskers the past five years.

Imagine trying to run or lift weights hard and constantly having to deal with your body telling you to let up, or the unceasing pain that tells you that you'd better stop now, or have severe consequences later.

The mental part was as hard as the physical part for Swiney. Sitting out made one pain go away, the physical one. But it brought on a different kind of pain, an emotional hurt. When Swiney came to terms with it, he found a new road. One might call it a "high road" of sorts, taking the time to heal and grow, as a player and as a person.

"It was a character building experience," Swiney said. "I feel good about it because I turned a negative into a positive. To even play at this level, you have to take the things thrown at you and deal with it."

He did deal with it, though he admits sitting out and watching as a redshirt two years into his career was hard.

"I had to deal with being out of the picture," Swiney said. "But I also had Mike (Brown) and Ralph to play with for a couple of years. They were very mature, and they really helped me learn a lot about how to carry yourself."

The year gave him a perspective and context that even Swiney himself admits he never would have had without the injury. Though he is by no means happy to have been injured, he can now see the game from the coaches' point of view, taking all of last year to study what happens from a distance, seeing where he can get better and even getting a better grip on his role in the defense.

"It taught me," Swiney said, "a whole lot."

Swiney, who has put on 22 pounds of muscle since the day he started as a true freshman three years ago, is more physical, especially with all of his newfound strength. He's also thoughtful. And as he ponders an answer, pushing back on his "corn row" hairstyle, he admits that he is proud that he never lost his focus during the comeback.

"This really molded me into who I am," said Swiney, who continues to climb as one of the all-time leaders in pass breakups. ■

**Bob Schaller** covers the Huskers for the North Platte Telegraph and Scottsbluff Star-Herald. He can be reached at schallerc@aol.com.



**Erwin Swiney started nine games as a true freshman in 1997.**

# Chace Gets His Chance

***Wahoo walkon gets his shot as Huskers' kickoff specialist***



**Curt  
McKEEVER**

THERE WAS A TIME when it would have been more fitting for Chace Long's first name to be Chance.

As it in fat chance he was ever going to see the field.

Even Long, a walk-on kicker from Wahoo, marvels when thinking about all he's faced trying to get some game action during his five years with the Cornhuskers.

"Kris Brown was here, and then we recruited Josh (Brown), and he's good,"

Long said recently. "It's amazing they just keep reloading on the talent. I knew it was going to take a lot of hard work and a lot of time before I could get in there."

In his first three seasons, Long kicked off in just three games — twice as a freshman in 1997 and in last year's season opener against Iowa. He also knocked through an extra point against California on the only attempt of his career.

And when Dan Hadenfeldt was granted a sixth year of eligibility, Long's prospects for seeing much more action didn't look good.

Fortunately for him, there's a lot more to the story.

In case his appeal for an extra year of college was denied, Hadenfeldt had played in the Hula Bowl last January to showcase his talents in front of pro scouts. The NCAA eventually granted him that year but then mandated he would have to sit out the first game as penalty for playing in the all-star contest.

Long, who kicked a 55-yard field goal in high school, seized the opportunity.

During Nebraska's 49-13 win against San Jose State, he booted four of his eight kickoffs into the end zone for touchbacks. Two others resulted in the ball-carrier being tackled at the 18, and the remaining two returns were stopped at the 27 and 31.

That left San Jose State starting its drives, on average, at the 22.

Hadenfeldt, a preseason All-American punter, returned for the Notre Dame game the following week, but he was uncharacteristically off. While three of his kickoffs found the end zone, none went high enough or deep enough to be downed. Julius Jones returned one 100 yards for a touchdown. The Irish's average starting position on the other three was the 36.

Suddenly, Long was back in the mix for kickoff duties. And after a week of practice, it was announced he would handle those for the Iowa game.

You can imagine how his week went leading up to that contest.

"I came here with the attitude that I'm going to put all my effort into doing a good job in school and come out to practice and do what I can," Long said. "The last few years

my role was kind of just to be almost at practice with those other guys, maybe push them a little bit and make them better. But I didn't come here just to go through practice. I've always had my eyes on playing, so it feels great to actually get that chance."

Not bad for a guy who's name was left off the opening-game roster published in the Lincoln Journal Star.

"I went to get some posters from sports information one day, and I had read the rosters in the paper and was like, 'Did you guys send over the right roster?' I was curious. My dad and stepmom got a little mad about it," Long said, smiling.

Not a problem. Any anger he might've had got taken out against San Jose State.

If you were sitting in the North end zone, it would have been hard not to notice during Long's second kickoff after halftime.

That one went through the uprights and landed in the stands.

"I hit it and I knew I hit it good, and then the thing kept going and going," Long said. "Then I saw some arms going up in the stands, (and) I'm like, 'Are you kidding?' Everyone went nuts."

Hadenfeldt, who watched the game in street clothes, was among the first to welcome Long back to the sidelines.

As someone who walked on before being rewarded with a scholarship, Hadenfeldt knew exactly how Long was feeling.

"Chase is a good kicker and everyone's gonna say, 'Where does this guy come from? Here he is, a senior, from Nebraska. What's going on here?'" Hadenfeldt said. "The fact is he's a good kicker. He's been a good kicker for many years. That's how stuff is here."

"If the starter gets hurt, or something, at any other position somebody steps up and makes a big play and then everyone goes, 'Whoa, where did this guy come from?' Well, he's been in practice doing that same play every week and every day. Unfortunately, there's a handful of guys that everybody gets to see here on Saturday, and there's a lot more behind the scenes. That's what makes this place great."

Long, who's scheduled to graduate in December, might have been the No. 1 beneficiary to Hadenfeldt's opening-game status. But it was not just by chance that he ended up winning the job as the Cornhuskers' kickoff man.

"I didn't think Dan did a bad job," Long said, "but things happen . . . And we're all pretty good." ■



**Chace Long saw limited action in two games as a junior, making his only PAT attempt.**

---

**Curt McKeever** is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

# Looking Ahead

*While focusing on the present,  
Darlington takes a look at  
the future of the secondary*

**By Mike Babcock**

**T**errell Butler lugged a large red duffel bag and his shoulder pads and yellow practice jersey from the north fieldhouse to the South Stadium on the Tuesday before the Iowa game.

It was early evening, long after football practice had ended.

The freshman cornerback from Austell, Ga., was moving to the varsity locker room. He did so with pride, and a little trepidation. He didn't expect any practical jokes from roommate DeJuan Groce or the other defensive backs, he said. "But I don't know about some of those linemen."

Even so, he was enthusiastic about the move. "Yes sir," he said.

Willie Amos made the same equipment transfer a little later that day.

Butler and Amos, a free safety, are among four true freshmen playing for Nebraska this season. The others are strongside linebacker T.J. Hollowell and rush end Benard Thomas, who was held out the first two games before the coaches made the decision to play him against Iowa.

Hollowell and Thomas are playing because of a pronounced lack of depth at their positions. Though depth is a less-pressing problem in

the secondary, Butler and Amos are playing because defensive backs coach George Darlington learned long ago that it's never too soon to think about the future.

Safeties Clint Finley, Joe Walker and Troy Watchorn are seniors, and "I don't want to play Notre Dame in the second game of (next) season and have a voided position," Darlington said.

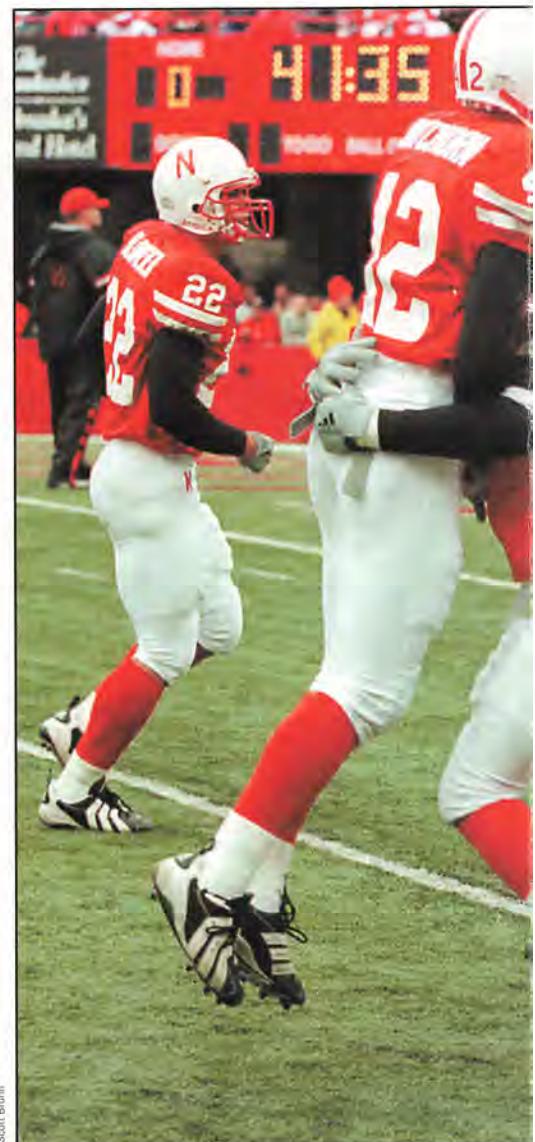
The Fighting Irish are scheduled to play at Memorial Stadium on Sept. 8.

Amos is a free safety and even though Butler is a cornerback now, he'll probably be moved to rover in the spring. Former Cornhusker Mike Brown, who starts for the NFL's Chicago Bears as a rookie, went the same route, playing cornerback as a true freshman and then switching to rover.

Cornerback is the easier than either safety position to learn. "I used to kiddingly say to the corners if you could learn the signals for the defense, the village idiot could play corner," said Darlington. "Compared to rovers and free safeties, they have fewer problems with adjustments.

"They (corners) have less on them mentally but they have more on them physically."

Darlington began looking to the future while focusing on the present when he was coaching the defensive ends. Though his approach has been influenced by decreasing scholarship numbers, which have led to the



Scott Bralon

increased use of true freshmen in general, he points to a 10-7 loss to Iowa in 1981.

Jimmy Williams and Derrie Nelson were the starting defensive ends in 1980. But Williams was the only experienced player at the position returning in 1981. Williams, who would earn All-America recognition (as Nelson had in 1980), "was tremendous," Darlington said.

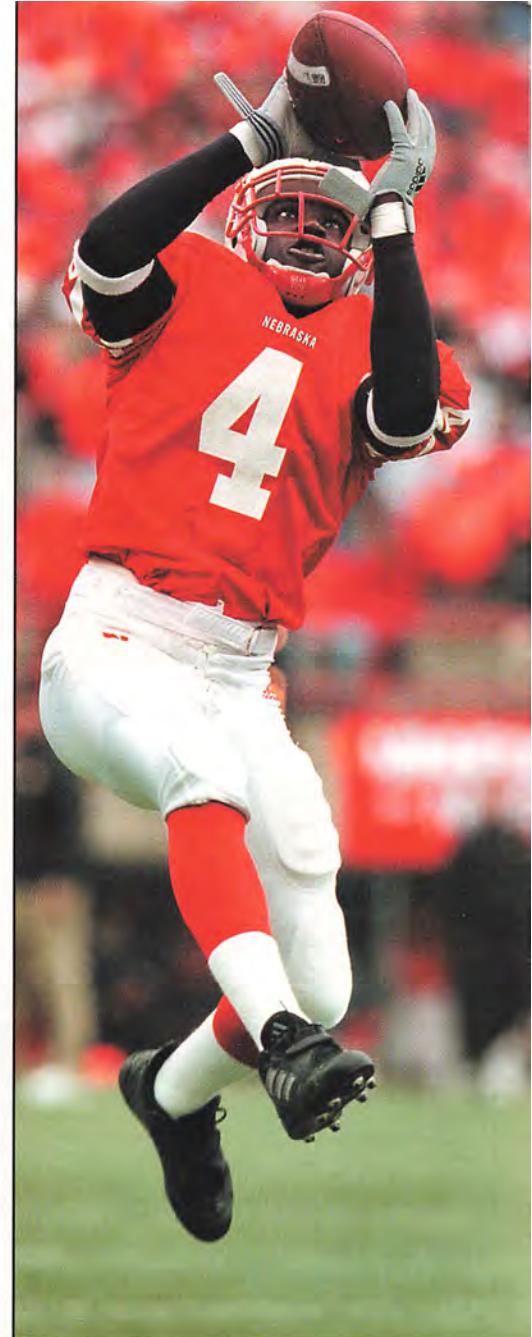
"But on the other side, we actually played that game with two players as starter and second-team that by the third game of the season weren't even on the two-deeps. Now you can say, hey, you didn't give up many points, which is true. But we needed to shut them out in that particular game."

"So consequently, I do make a conscious effort of looking ahead a year from now."

He identified Butler early on as a player he planned to keep with the varsity. He made the decision on



**George Darlington**, the dean of the Nebraska football coaching staff, works with the secondary before the Iowa game. Darlington, the only remaining member of Tom Osborne's original Husker staff, is in his 28th season at Nebraska and his 15th as the secondary coach. One of his young pupils is true freshman Terrell Butler (right).



Amos closer to the opener against San Jose State. "It was tough," said Darlington. "But he (Amos) kept showing so much and we think he'll be an excellent special teams player.

"We expect him to get enough snaps to go into next year with a lot of confidence."

Darlington's willingness to play true freshmen, however limited their roles might be, has enabled the secondary to adjust quickly to the loss of Mike Brown and Ralph Brown.

The adjustment has been relatively smooth, according to Groce, who is sharing with Erwin Swiney the right cornerback position at which Ralph Brown was the starter for four seasons.

"Last year it was more Mike and Ralph's secondary. That's how the

media put it," Groce said. "It's more our secondary this year, not just (the secondary of) two singled-out people.

"They helped us out last year. And we brought it back to this year."

Three of the top six defensive backs played as true freshmen: Swiney, Walker, a rover, and Keyuo Craver, the left cornerback. Groce and safeties Finley and Dion Booker redshirted as freshmen. But the decision to redshirt them wasn't made until after the non-conference games.

Groce was included on the travel roster for the California game in 1998, when he was a true freshman. And "I got to dress for three games," he said. "So that was cool."

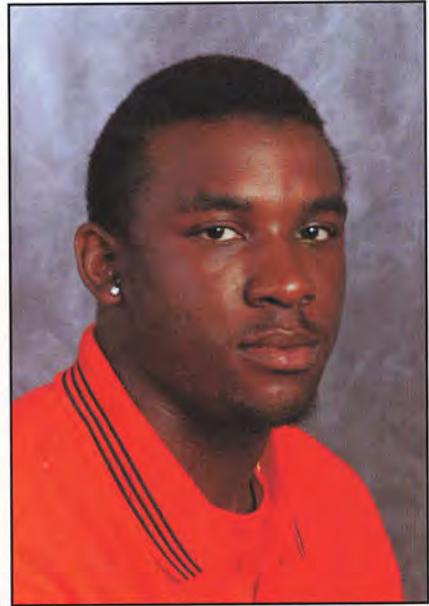
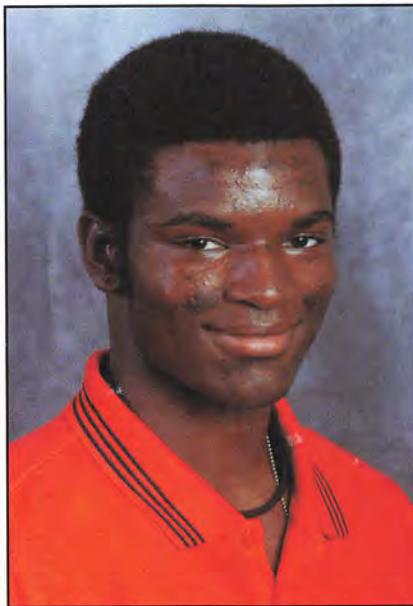
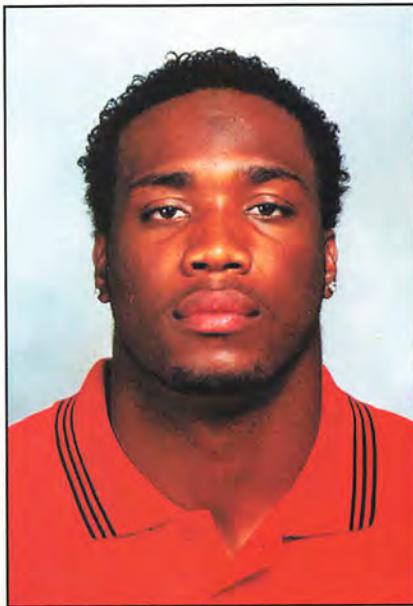
He probably wouldn't have been redshirted if not for an Achilles ten-

don problem. After the California trip, "they said it's not healing up, so you might as well go ahead and red-shirt," he said.

"I was supposed to come in and play. But I wasn't discouraged because I thought, 'Oh, I get to go against the No. 1's every day (in practice). So I've got to get better. Every time I do something good, it's going to come back to Coach Darlington. Somebody's going to see the improvement.'

Walker, like Groce, expected to play right away. His mindset was, he would "fight for a job and wherever it falls, it falls," he said. "But I wanted to play my freshman year."

He was used as a nickel back, which is "really another corner out there," as a true freshman in 1997.



Joe Walker (left) played as a true freshman in 1997. True freshmen Willie Amos (middle) and Terrell Butler are in the secondary rotation this season.

Swiney became the starting left cornerback as a true freshman four games into that season.

Craver, a true freshman the same season as Groce, dealt with the question of redshirting or not philosophically. "I think everything happens for a reason, and they (the coaches) felt I

didn't need to redshirt," he said. "I think it ended up for the good of the team, and for me also."

Darlington has determined that not redshirting a freshman or two in the secondary is good for the team. So Butler and Amos are now housed in the varsity locker room.

Darlington told Butler after two-a-days that he wouldn't be redshirting.

"If they wanted me to redshirt, I was going to redshirt," Butler said. "If they wanted me to play, I was going to play. I knew I had a little bit of a chance. But I'll do anything they want me to do." ■

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# Vets Understand Rookies' Situation

Joe Walker can empathize with Terrell Butler and Willie Amos.

"I can understand what they're going through because I was in their situation," Walker said.

So were Erwin Swiney and Keyuo Craver. They all played as true freshmen. And they all benefited from having played in the same secondary with Ralph Brown and Mike Brown.

"Ralph helped me out a lot," said Craver, who was wearing a Blackshirt by the end of his freshman season in 1998. "And Mike . . . Mike was like my brother. He's a real good friend."

Craver has tried to emulate Mike Brown, who "never let up, no matter whether we were playing a team that was a 50-point underdog or a 2-point

underdog," Craver said.

"He kept playing intensely, in practice, in warm-ups, whatever. He just stayed intense, focused. That's one thing I've tried to pattern myself after him, that you should stay focused on every play."

Craver has kept in touch with Mike Brown, who's a Chicago Bears rookie.

When they talk by phone, Brown tells him to "just make sure I get it down mentally. He says I've already got the ability to be a great player, it's just the mental approach," said Craver.

"I need to stay mentally prepared for the good and the bad. When you make good plays, don't get so wrapped up in them. And when you make bad plays, don't get wrapped up in them."

Craver has tried to pass on such wisdom to the younger players in the secondary.

So has Walker. "They kind of make me feel old a little bit," he said. "But that's part of the role. People come in. People move on. That's part of life. You've just got to get used to it, and adjust."

## Freshmen in the Secondary

**1994** — Octavious McFarlin (Michael Booker & Jamel Williams play as first-year sophomores)

**1995** — none (Eric Warfield plays as a first-year sophomore)

**1996** — Ralph Brown, Mike Brown

**1997** — Joe Walker, Erwin Swiney

**1998** — Keyuo Craver

**1999** — Taylor Gehman

**2000** — Terrell Butler, Willie Amos ■

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# He Knows Where He's Going

**Husker cornerback**  
**Craver still running at the front of the pack**

**K**eyuo Craver doesn't have to stop to ask for directions. He knows where he's headed.

"You've got to have a game plan," he said. "I've always made sure I've got some kind of order."

He's also made sure that he keeps himself busy.

As a high school student in the tiny east Texas town of Harleton, he competed in football, basketball and track and field. He was on the student council. And he was active in his church.

"I just feel like when you're not doing anything, somebody's going to pass you," he said, offering a variation on the philosophy espoused by Hall of Fame baseball pitcher Satchel Paige.

"Don't look back," Paige said. "Someone might be gaining on you."

Craver has left plenty of people behind, literally. In high school, he was a four-time state champion in the triple jump, and his statistics as a football running back were not to be believed.

As a senior, he rushed for 3,024 yards and 50 touchdowns, numbers that put him in the same class as legendary Texas high school running back Kenny Hall of Sugar Land. In the early 1950s, Hall established national prep season and career rushing records that held for more than 40 years.

Despite his credentials as a running back, however, Nebraska recruited Craver to play defensive back. And he was a good enough defensive back to avoid a redshirt and play immediately. After a season as a back-up, he became the starter on the left side.

Craver is still running at the front of the pack, figuratively as well as literally.

Football hasn't filled all of his time since he's been at Nebraska. He has continued to compete in track and field. And he has pushed himself in the classroom. He's a communications major, with a 3.031 cumulative grade-point average. He was a second-team Academic All-Big 12 honoree last season. And he's been on the Big 12 Commissioner's Spring Academic Honor Roll twice.

At a time when more and more stu-

## KEYUEO CRAVER

**No. 3**  
**Junior**  
**Cornerback**  
**5-11, 190**  
**Harleton,**  
**Texas**



Scott Brumley

dents, whether athletes or not, are taking more than four years to complete undergraduate degrees, Craver's plan is to finish his in three-and-a-half years.

"I'm not going to do it in three years," he said, alluding to teammate Bobby Newcombe's unique academic accomplishment. "But it's close enough."

Craver could have been overwhelmed by the university.

"My town is smaller than some of the classes here," he said.

When he was "11 or 12" years old, his family moved from the Dallas-Fort Worth area to Harleton, which "was like Mayberry," he said, referring to the television setting of the Andy Griffith series. "It was fun though. I caught all the hay bales and chasing horses and pigs at a good age."

"It was a real big change to come up here and be a part of this program. But my parents instilled in me that I was (going to be) adjusting and everything, so it was no big thing."

Because of his commitments on the football field and in the classroom, "I'm always busy. There's no time to do anything else," said Craver, who is

enrolled for 17 credit hours this semester, a course load he describes as "only 17 hours." He took 18 hours last spring and nine hours in the summer.

"I really have no time for too much else," he said.

The demands are such that he has to push himself some days. "Those are usually the days you work the hardest, when you don't want to," he said. "I feel like that a lot of times."

"But I know that there's a stronger power that's going to help me through."

Craver has a plan for his future, too. He would like to play professional football, which has "been a dream of mine since I was 4-years-old," he said. "So if it presents itself, of course."

And if not, Craver will turn his attention to another career field, one that he plans to pursue when football, at whatever level, is finished — pharmaceutical sales.

"I know people that are in pharmaceutical sales," he said. "I like to travel. I like meeting people. I like getting to know people. So I just feel like that would be a good job."

And it certainly sounds like a plan. ■

# Nebraska 42

# Missouri 24



Nebraska quarterback Eric Crouch finds an opening in the Missouri defense. Crouch was NU's leading rusher with 24 carries for 110 yards.

# Blackshirts

**Husker defense frustrated after allowing 492 yards in 42-24 victory**

**Stories by  
Mike Babcock  
Photos by  
Scott Bruhn**

**N**ebraska's Blackshirts wanted to make a statement against Missouri.

They wanted to establish the fact that "we still ruled the roost in the Big 12 Conference," senior rush end and co-captain Kyle Vanden Bosch said after a 42-24 victory at Memorial Stadium.

"I don't know if we sent that statement out today."

Vanden Bosch was probably being diplomatic in his role as captain because he knew very well that the statement hadn't been sent, not after giving up 492 yards and 24 points.

"As a player, you don't like to focus on stats," he said.

But those Missouri amassed couldn't be ignored. They weren't "reflective of Blackshirt defense," said Vanden Bosch. "We like to come out, set the tone and really shut people down."

"We like it to be three-and-out all game (long). And we like to come up with big plays."

Missouri went three-and-out only once, picking up 22 first downs.

The Blackshirts did come up with a big play when back-up middle linebacker Jamie Burrow scooped up a fumble forced by rush end Chris Kelsay and returned it for a touchdown.

Burrow's play, with 8:14 remaining



**Backup fullback Judd Davies, a redshirt freshman, made a significant contribution to the offensive effort, gaining 65 yards in just three carries. He also had one reception for 15 yards.**

in the third quarter, was among Nebraska's defensive positives. And "we want to keep building on those things," defensive coordinator Craig Bohl said.

On balance, however, there weren't nearly as many positives as he would have liked. Missouri, under the direc-

tion of sophomore quarterback Kirk Farmer, "had us pretty much off-balance for the majority of the night," he said. "That was not a vanilla game plan (on defense)."

But the Tigers "did a good job" against it. They were 6-of-15 on third-down conversions and had 20 plays

# Feeling Blue



that gained 10 or more yards, including nine that were good for 23 or more yards.

Vanden Bosch was at a loss to explain how a Missouri team that had scored only 19 points combined in its last two games could move the ball so successfully against the Blackshirts. "Teams are picking up some vulnerable spots in our defense, and that's more frustrating than anything," he said.

"We'd like to think we're such a

dominant defense that there are no weak spots."

But so far this season, "teams have been able to capitalize on a few," said Vanden Bosch. "We've worked to iron those things out, but we just haven't done that yet."

In the first three games the defense might have bent, but it didn't often break.

"I don't know," Vanden Bosch said. "I've been around some great defenses here. We've been practicing as well as any team. We've been practicing really hard. The coaches have us ready to play a great game. We really are prepared well and just by game time it seems we lose our edge."

Losing the edge isn't from lack of effort, however.

"I'm not disappointed with the effort," he said. "We've got a great group of players and we're flying around out there on the field. Nobody is ever giving half an effort. Everybody is always going full speed. The effort isn't a problem. We've had a few blown assignments here and there."

"And you can't have that if you want to be a dominant defense."

Fortunately for the Cornhuskers, the offense was clicking enough with the running and passing of quarterback Eric Crouch to offset Missouri's big plays. And Bobby Newcombe gave the special teams a much-needed confidence boost with a record-setting 94-yard punt return for a touchdown.

"We improved in some areas" of special teams play, Coach Frank Solich said. However, "there's no phase of the game that we can't improve on. We just need to keep getting better."

Missouri quarterback Kirk Farmer was a source of constant consternation for Nebraska until he left the game with a broken clavicle with 6:51 remaining in the third quarter.

Time and again Farmer eluded the pass rush and ran or found an open receiver crossing the middle. The Cornhuskers never sacked him, even though "we were blitzing quite a bit," said Bohl.

"It seemed like we were always coming up about a foot short."

Nebraska's defense wasn't at full strength. Starting defensive tackle Loran Kaiser injured his left foot on the

## Husker Player of the Game



Correll Buckhalter

## I-back Makes Plays

Correll Buckhalter didn't get many opportunities to handle the ball in Nebraska's 42-24 victory against Missouri. But he made the most of those he got.

Nebraska's senior I-back rushed for 94 yards on only seven carries and caught one pass for 34 yards and a touchdown, which gave the Cornhuskers a 14-7 lead early in the second quarter.

His effort at the end of the run enabled him to reach the end zone.

"Whatever I'm called on to do," said Buckhalter.

His career-long 58-yard run from the Nebraska 14-yard line also helped set up a touchdown just before halftime, on a 13-yard pass from quarterback Eric Crouch to tight end Jon Bowling. ■



Nebraska rush end Chris Kelsay (57) jars the football loose from Missouri tailback Zack Abron. Husker teammate Jamie Burrow picked up the fumble and ran 28 yards for a third-quarter touchdown.

game's first series and didn't return. Back-up nose tackle Jon Clanton missed the game to attend his grandmother's funeral. And middle linebacker Carlos Polk was bothered by an ankle sprain.

But no one used those things as excuses.

"Right now, it's the little things that we're missing," strongside linebacker Scott Shanle said. "We'll have one mental breakdown and the other team will go 70 yards."

"I didn't expect to be answering questions about the defense like I did after last week's game (against Iowa). But Missouri was a tough team to prepare for. You have to be ready for anything. If we can get everyone on the

right page, and I believe I can, that's when you'll see the real Blackshirts."

Bohl admitted he was frustrated. But he remained up-beat.

"I'm not alarmed. We're not going to panic," he said.

Vanden Bosch didn't seem panicked as he stood in front of reporters in the South Stadium varsity lounge afterward. Why were the Blackshirts losing their edge at game time?

"I don't know," he said. "As a senior and a captain, I take a lot of responsibility for that. It's my job to make sure the players are ready. I need to bring a little excitement to the players and have them ready to play a great game. We just don't have that edge we need to have out there."

The defensive problems are for lack of motivation. "There really is no group of players I'd rather go to battle with," Vanden Bosch said. "We've got a really talented group, really great guys."

"I'm confident going into battle with them. It's just that we've had our breakdowns. I know we'll get them ironed out. But we need to get it done now. We're in the heat of the Big 12 Conference."

Nebraska, which has been No. 1 in the Associated Press and ESPN/USA Today polls since the preseason, now must be concerned about getting past undefeated Iowa State at Ames.

And the Cornhuskers' place atop the polls might be in jeopardy.

# 4TH & INCHES

Notes And Quotes From The Missouri Game

## BOBBY THE JET

Bobby Newcombe's 94-yard punt return for a touchdown in the second quarter was a school record. Johnny Rodgers set the previous record of 92 yards against Oklahoma State in 1971.

The punt return, the fourth for a touchdown during Newcombe's career, also tied the Big 12 record, shared by Kansas State's David Allen and Lamar Chapman and Kansas's Isaac Byrd.

Newcombe's last punt return for a touchdown, an 86-yarder, was against Kansas last season.

Newcombe lined up near his own 15-yard line, before dropping back to field the punt. "I wanted to make sure I caught the ball," he said. "I didn't know I was going back too far."

"I'll probably get in trouble on Monday."

The Cornhuskers hadn't been effective in returning punts in their first three games and "a lot of pressure has been put on us to improve," Newcombe said. "We've spent a lot of time on that."

The return came with 3:34 remaining in the first half and gave Nebraska a 21-7 lead.

"The punt return definitely was a big play," said Missouri Coach Larry Smith. "And I think the fumble that they took in for a touchdown was the difference."

Jamie Burrow, Nebraska's No. 2 middle linebacker, picked up a fumble forced by rush end Chris Kelsay and returned it 28 yards for a touchdown to make the score 35-21 with 8:14 remaining in the third quarter. "Those two plays were the difference in the game," Smith said.

Burrow's touchdown was the second by the Cornhusker defense this season. Free safety Troy Watchorn returned an interception for a touchdown in the Iowa game.

## JOHNNY THE JET

The timing of Newcombe's punt return was fitting. Rodgers, Nebraska's first Heisman Trophy winner in 1972, received a plaque from the College Football Hall of Fame prior to the game.

That the record had belonged to Rodgers "makes it even more special," Newcombe said.

"That was very fitting," said Cornhusker Coach Frank Solich.

Rodgers is among 14 in the Class of 2000, which will be honored at a banquet in New York City in December and enshrined in the Hall of Fame in South Bend, Ind., in August of 2001.

He is the 12th Nebraska player to be selected to the College Football Hall of Fame. Six Cornhusker coaches, including Tom Osborne and Bob Devaney, also are enshrined.

## LACK OF TACKLES

The Cornhuskers' depth at defensive tackle was seriously depleted when senior starter Loran Kaiser left the game early in the first quarter with an injured left foot. Even though an x-ray of the foot seemed to indicate no fracture, Kaiser did not return to action. In addition, Jon Clanton, the top back-up behind Jason Lohr at nose tackle, missed the game to attend his grandmother's funeral.

## MISSOURI HUSKERS

Nebraska's roster includes four players from Missouri: I-back Dan Alexander (Wentzville), tight end Tracey Wistrom (Webb City), center John Garrison (Blue Springs) and linebacker Jason Richenberger (Liberty). Richenberger, a freshman, is sitting out the season as a redshirt.

## FIRST SCORE

Nebraska sophomore tight end Jon Bowling caught the first touchdown pass of his career with 1:05 remaining in the first half to increase the lead to 28-14 at the intermission.

The play covered 13 yards. "It was an awesome feeling to get that touchdown," he said. "It happens so fast that it's hard to enjoy right then. But now that I think about it, it was so much fun."

## HE'S NO. 2

Matt Davison, the Cornhuskers' senior split end, caught five passes for 66 yards to move past Irving Fryar into second-place on the career list for receiving yards. Davison now has 82 receptions for 1,258 yards. The 82 receptions are tied for second on the career list with Jeff Kinney.

Rodgers is atop both career lists.

All five of Davison's catches were good for first downs. ■



"I think we have the talent. We have the ability. We have the potential," said Vanden Bosch. "But I don't know if we have played up to championship level yet."

Like Bohl, he tried to pick out and emphasize the positives in the victory.

"The thing I'm really encouraged by is, we have played in close games, games that probably shouldn't have been close, but you're going to get those in a big year like we're hoping to have," he said. "And we've really showed (that) we've just been able to persevere. We haven't given up."

"We've kept coming and kept coming. And in big games you need to keep coming in the third and fourth quarters. So that's really encouraging."

That's Blackshirt defense. But much of the rest wasn't. ■

# SCOUTING REPORT

# 2000 Schedule

(Team's current record)

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>1 Sept. 2</b>  | <b>San Jose State (3-2), W 49-13</b>               |
| <b>2 Sept. 9</b>  | <b>at Notre Dame (2-2), W 27-24</b>                |
| <b>3 Sept. 23</b> | <b>Iowa (0-5), W 42-13</b>                         |
| <b>4 Sept. 30</b> | <b>Missouri (1-3), W 42-24</b>                     |
| <b>5 Oct. 7</b>   | <b>at Iowa State (4-0), 2:30 p.m., ABC</b>         |
| <b>6 Oct. 14</b>  | <b>at Texas Tech (4-1), TBA</b>                    |
| <b>7 Oct. 21</b>  | <b>Baylor (2-2), TBA</b>                           |
| <b>8 Oct. 28</b>  | <b>at Oklahoma (4-0), TBA</b>                      |
| <b>9 Nov. 4</b>   | <b>Kansas (2-2), TBA</b>                           |
| <b>10 Nov. 11</b> | <b>at Kansas State (5-0), TBA</b>                  |
| <b>11 Nov. 24</b> | <b>Colorado (0-4), 11 a.m., ABC</b>                |
| <b>Dec. 2</b>     | <b>Big 12 Championship<br/>at Kansas City, ABC</b> |

## Big 12 Standings

North			
	Conf.	All	
Kansas State	1	0	5 0
Nebraska	1	0	4 0
Iowa State	1	0	4 0
Kansas	0	0	2 2
Missouri	0	0	1 3
Colorado	0	0	0 4

South			
	Conf.	All	
Oklahoma	1	0	4 0
Texas	1	0	3 1
Texas A&M	1	0	3 1
Texas Tech	0	1	4 1
Baylor	0	1	2 2
Oklahoma State	0	1	2 2

### Sept. 30 results

Nebraska 42, Missouri 24  
Kansas State 44, Colorado 21  
Iowa State 31, Baylor 17  
Oklahoma 34, Kansas 16  
Texas 42, Oklahoma State 7  
Texas A&M 33, Texas Tech 15

**Nonconference opponents**  
San Jose State 29, Rice 16  
Indiana 45, Iowa 33

## Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

<b>Iowa State (4-0)</b>
Ohio, W 25-15
UNLV, W 37-22
at Iowa, W 24-14
at Baylor, W 31-17
Sept. 2
Sept. 9
Sept. 16
Sept. 30
Oct. 7
Oct. 14
Oct. 21
Oct. 28
Nov. 4
Nov. 11
Nov. 18
<b>Texas Tech (4-1)</b>
New Mexico, W 24-3
Sept. 2
Sept. 9
Sept. 16
Sept. 30
Oct. 7
Oct. 14
Oct. 21
Oct. 28
Nov. 4
Nov. 11
Nov. 18
Sept. 2
Sept. 9
Sept. 16
Sept. 30
Oct. 7
Oct. 14
Oct. 21
Oct. 28
Nov. 4
Nov. 11
Nov. 18
North Texas, W 13-7
Louisiana-Lafayette, W 26-0
at Texas A&M, L 33-15
Baylor
Nebraska
at Kansas State
at Kansas
Texas
Oklahoma State
at Oklahoma

## Game 5

### At Iowa State Oct. 7

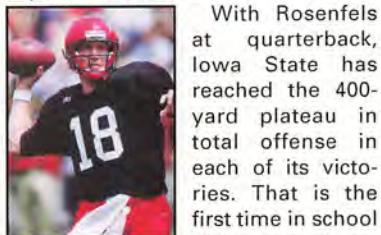
**Location:** Ames, Iowa  
**Enrollment:** 26,110  
**1999 record:** 4-7  
**Coach:** Dan McCarney, 6th year  
**Series:** Nebraska leads 78-14-2



**2:30 p.m. (ABC),  
Jack Trice Stadium, Ames, Iowa**

### Cyclone to Watch

**Quarterback Sage Rosenfels** is among 23 senior quarterbacks selected as candidates for the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, presented annually to the nation's top senior quarterback.



With Rosenfels at quarterback, Iowa State has reached the 400-yard plateau in total offense in each of its victories. That is the first time in school history that the

Cyclones have opened the season with four games in which they have posted at least 400 total yards.

Against Baylor, Rosenfels completed 12 of 23 passes for 167 yards and one touchdown. For the season, he is 62-111 for 875 yards and three touchdowns. He has been intercepted three times.

### Quick Facts

**Iowa State is off** to its best start since 1980, when it went 5-0 en route to a 6-5 finish. The Cyclones' victory over Baylor was only their fifth Big 12 victory in five seasons.

**Tailback Ennis Haywood** ran for 241 yards and two touchdowns against Baylor. Haywood, who has topped 100 yards in all four victories, had 101 yards and both of his touchdowns by halftime.

## On Deck

### At Texas Tech Oct. 14

**Location:** Lubbock, Texas  
**Enrollment:** 24,185  
**1999 record:** 6-5  
**Coach:** Mike Leach, first year  
**Series:** Nebraska leads 5-0



**Time TBA  
Jones Stadium, Lubbock, Texas**

## Tentative 2 Deeps

### NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	3	Matt Davison***	6-1	185	Sr.
9		Wilson Thomas*	6-5	205	Sr.
LT	58	Dave Volk**	6-5	290	Jr.
66		Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	77	Toniu Fonoti*	6-4	335	Sr.
50		Jon Dawson	6-2	280	Fr.
C	54	Dominic Raiola**	6-2	300	Jr.
66		Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
RG	55	Russ Hochstein***	6-4	290	Sr.
50		Jon Dawson	6-2	280	Fr.
RT	65	Jason Schwab**	6-1	305	Sr.
66		Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
TE	87	Tracey Wistrom**	6-5	230	Jr.
99		Aaron Golliday*	6-4	285	Sr.
QB	7	Eric Crouch**	6-1	200	Jr.
10		Jammal Lord	6-2	210	Fr.
FB	15	Willie Miller***	6-1	245	Sr.
4		Judd Davies	6-0	240	Fr.
IB	38	Dan Alexander***	6-0	245	Sr.
and 36		Correll Buckhalter**	6-0	225	Sr.
WB	12	Bobby Newcombe***	6-0	200	Sr.
8		John Gibson**	6-0	195	Sr.
PK	26	Josh Brown*	6-2	190	Sr.

### NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR	98	Demoine Adams*	6-2	235	Sr.
57		Chris Kelsay*	6-5	255	Sr.
NT	70	Jason Lohr*	6-2	275	Jr.
55		Jon Clanton*	6-2	275	Sr.
DT	91	Loran Kaiser**	6-4	290	Sr.
56		Jeremy Slechta**	6-6	285	Jr.
RR	83	KyleVanden Bosch***	6-4	260	Sr.
95		J.P. Wichmann*	6-4	230	Jr.
SLB	43	Scott Shanie*	6-2	230	Sr.
41		Rod Baker*	6-0	225	Sr.
MLB	13	Carlos Polk***	6-2	260	Sr.
48		Jamie Burrow**	6-1	225	Jr.
WLB34		Randy Stella*	6-0	200	Jr.
9		Mark Vedral**	6-1	205	Jr.
LCB	3	Keyuo Craver**	5-10	190	Jr.
28		Pat Ricketts	5-11	180	Fr.
FS	14	Dion Booker**	6-1	205	Jr.
or 19		Clint Finley***	6-0	205	Sr.
ROV	25	Joe Walker***	5-10	205	Sr.
or 19		Clint Finley***	6-0	205	Sr.
RCB	16	Erwin Swiney**	6-0	185	Jr.
or 5		DeJuan Groce*	5-10	190	Sr.
PK	17	Dan Hadenfeldt*	5-11	195	Sr.

### IOWA STATE OFFENSE

SE	86	Chris Anthony***	6-3	204	Sr.
82		Lane Danielson	6-0	197	Fr.
LT	75	Marcel Howard**	6-6	313	Jr.
67		Cory Hannen**	6-5	300	Jr.
LG	70	Ben Beaudet***	6-4	286	Sr.
65		Bob Montgomery	6-3	311	Fr.
C	63	Ben Bruns***	6-3	295	Sr.
68		Zach Butler*	6-4	285	Sr.
RG	76	Lorenzo White	6-5	340	Jr.
69		Scott Rickard*	6-3	274	Sr.
RT	72	Andy Stensrud**	6-7	280	Sr.
67		Cory Hannen**	6-5	300	Jr.
TE	31	Mike Banks**	6-4	254	Jr.
93		Kyle Knock	6-2	250	Sr.
QB	18	Sage Rosenfels***	6-4	221	Sr.
17		Gerrin Scott	6-0	209	Fr.
TB	2	Ennis Haywood**	5-11	206	Jr.
20		Michael Wagner	5-7	182	Fr.
FB	45	Joe Woodley	5-10	233	Fr.
42		Frank Garcia	5-9	225	Fr.
WR	19	Craig Campbell*	5-11	185	Jr.
83		J. Montgomery	5-11	190	Fr.
PK	96	Mike McKnight*	6-2	209	Jr.

### IOWA STATE DEFENSE

RE	15	Reggie Hayward***	6-5	250	Sr.
95		William Judd	6-4	280	Jr.
DT	52	James Reed***	6-0	285	Sr.
98		Nigel Sharpe***	6-3	290	Sr.
NG	44	Ryan Harklau***	6-4	280	Sr.
92		Jordan Carstens	6-5	275	Fr.
E	99	Kevin DeRonde**	6-5	255	Jr.
90		Casey Shelton	6-6	275	Fr.
OLB	4	Derrick Walker*	6-2	235	Sr.
23		Stevie Johnson	6-4	225	Sr.
MLB	56	Tyrone Tucker	6-2	236	Jr.
46		Matt Word*	5-11	235	Sr.
OLB	48	Justin Ellers	6-2	225	Jr.
41		Ab Turner**	6-0	220	Sr.
SS	24	Doug Densmore***	5-10	195	Sr.
9		Adam Runk**	6-2	184	Jr.
FS	7	Dustin Avey***	6-2	208	Sr.
18		Marc Timmons	5-9	168	Fr.
LCB	21	Atif Austin*	5-8	180	Sr.
27		Breon Ansley***	5-7	172	Sr.
RCB	8	Jamaricus Powers*	5-8	164	Sr.
22		Ryan Sloth**	5-8	184	Sr.
P	6	Carl Gomez***	6-2	198	Sr.

## THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION



OCT. 7, 2000

HUSKERS TANGLE WITH NEW & IMPROVED CYCLONES AND TIE UP ANOTHER VICTORY!

## PICKS

### NEBRASKA AT

### IOWA STATE

#### Brian Hill Editor

The Cyclones have an improved, veteran cast that should keep it competitive for at least part of the game. The weather in Ames is usually awful for this game, so that might keep the score down. **Nebraska 37, Iowa State 20**

#### Mike Babcock Contributing Editor

Dan McCarney, ever the optimist, has some veterans on defense and an experienced quarterback in Sage Rosenfels. Those elements might be sufficient to test the Cornhuskers, who are playing three of their next four games on the road. This is probably a better Iowa State team than the one that upset Nebraska at Ames in 1992. But it's also a better Cornhusker team than the one that lost there. **Nebraska 35, Iowa State**

#### Bob Schaller Contributing Writer

Iowa State is playing for Dan McCarney's job. The Cyclones are way better this year, no doubt about it. This would seem to be a similar setup to what happened with Arizona State a few years ago, losing horribly in Lincoln and turning the corner at home the next year, shocking the world. It won't happen this time. **Nebraska 38, Iowa State 17**

#### Terry Douglass Grand Island (Neb.) Independent Sports Editor

The good news for Iowa State is that the Cyclones have their best team of the Dan McCarney era. The bad news for ISU is that Nebraska's Frank Solich just might have his best team, too. Iowa State will hang around for a half before the Cornhuskers establish control. **Nebraska 40, Iowa State 17**

# BY THE NUMBERS

**Missouri vs. Nebraska**  
Sept. 30, 2000 • Lincoln, Neb.

## Score By Quarters

<b>Missouri</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>42</b>

## Team Stats

	<b>MU</b>	<b>NU</b>
First Downs	22	27
Rushing	8	12
Passing	13	11
Penalty	1	4
Rushing Attempts	31	53
Yards Gained Rushing	216	353
Yards Lost Rushing	7	42
Net Yards Rushing	209	311
Net Yards Passing	283	173
Passes Attempted	39	23
Passes Completed	19	11
Had Intercepted	1	0
Total Plays	70	76
Total Net Yards	492	484
Avg. Gain Per Play	7.0	6.4
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	1-0
Penalties-Yards	10-95	7-53
Punts-Yards	8-322	5-217
Avg. Per Punt	40.2	43.4
Punt Returns-Yards	2-12	5-120
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	1-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	1-28
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-37	2-22
Possession Time	26:15	33:45

## Scoring

**MU** — Kirk Farmer 1-yard run (Brad Hammerich kick)  
**NU** — Dan Alexander 2-yard run (Josh Brown kick)  
**NU** — Correll Buckhalter 34-yard pass from Eric Crouch (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Bobby Newcombe 94-yard punt return (Brown kick)  
**MU** — Justin Gage 48-yard pass from Farmer (Hammerich kick)  
**NU** — Jon Bowling 13-yard pass from Crouch (Brown kick)  
**MU** — Zack Abron 13-yard run (Hammerich kick)  
**NU** — Jamie Burrow 28-yard fumble return (Brown kick)  
**MU** — Hammerich 27-yard field goal  
**NU** — Crouch 8-yard run (Brown kick)  
**Att.** — 77,744  
**Temp.** — 85

## Individual Leaders

### MISSOURI

<b>RUSHING</b>					
Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Farmer, K.	9	83	9.2	33	1
Abron, Z.	12	62	5.2	29	1
Gilmore, Z.	8	36	4.5	13	0
Outlaw, D.	2	28	14.0	29	0

<b>PASSING</b>					
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD	
Farmer, K.	13-25-0	52.0	214	1	
Outlaw, D.	5-11-1	45.5	34	0	
Gage, J.	1-3-0	33.3	35	0	

<b>RECEIVING</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Gage, J.	5	125	25.0	48	1
Blakley, D.	5	45	9.0	16	0
Spencer, E.	3	47	15.7	32	0
Gilmore, Z.	3	17	5.7	13	0
Dausman, J.	2	14	7.0	9	0
Farmer, K.	1	35	35.0	35	0

<b>PUNTING</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	
Gilpin, J.	8	322	40.2	55	

<b>PUNT RETURNS</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Spencer, E.	2	12	6.0	11	0

<b>KICKOFF RETURNS</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Rhodes, E.	2	37	18.5	30	0

### NEBRASKA

<b>RUSHING</b>					
Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Crouch, E.	24	110	4.6	29	1
Buckhalter, C.	7	94	13.4	58	0
Davies, J.	3	65	21.7	32	0
Alexander, D.	13	34	2.6	11	1
Diedrick, D.	1	6	6.0	6	0
Miller, W.	2	5	2.5	4	0
Miller, R.	1	1	1.0	1	0
Newcombe, B.	2	-4	-2.0	4	0

<b>PASSING</b>					
Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD	
Crouch, E.	11-23-0	50.0	173	2	

<b>RECEIVING</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Davison, M.	5	66	13.2	19	0
Wistrom, T.	2	27	13.5	22	0
Buckhalter, C.	1	34	34.0	34	1
Newcombe, B.	1	18	18.0	18	0
Davies, J.	1	15	15.0	15	0
Bowling, J.	1	13	13.0	13	1

<b>PUNTING</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	
Hadenfeldt, D.	5	217	43.4	50	

<b>PUNT RETURNS</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Newcombe, B.	3	100	33.3	94	1
Walker, J.	2	20	10.0	10	0

<b>KICKOFF RETURNS</b>					
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Walker, J.	1	14	14.0	14	0
Hassebroek, T.	1	8	8.0	8	0

<b>DEFENSE</b>					
Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.
Polk, C.	3	3	6	1-4	0
Vanden Bosch, K.	4	1	5	1-2	0
Vedral, M.	4	1	5	0	0
Walker, J.	2	3	5	1-1	0
Booker, D.	3	1	4	0	0
Kelsay, C.	2	2	4	0	0
Craver, K.	2	2	4	0	0
Stella, R.	3	0	3	0	0
Groce, D.	2	0	2	0	0
Watchorn, T.	2	0	2	0	0
Lohr, J.	1	1	2	0	0
Harden, C.	1	4	5	1-3	0
Monroe, D.	3	1	4	0	0
Duffy, P.	2	2	4	0	0
Whittington, D.	3	0	3	1-2	0
Ain, S.	3	0	3	0	0
Hollingquist, L.	1	2	3	0	0
Revard, D.	1	1	2	0	0
McCamy, D.	1	1	2	1-1	0
Harden, M.	1	0	1	0	0
Rhodes, R.	1	0	1	0	0
Jackson, T.	1	0	1	0	0
Gavins, M.	0	1	1	0	0



Nebraska tight end Jon Bowling scores a touchdown on a 13-yard pass from Eric Crouch.

## 2000 SEASON STATS

### RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Alexander, D.	4	63	467	116.8	0
Buckhalter, C.	4	45	354	88.5	0
Crouch, E.	4	60	340	85.0	7
Miller, W.	4	20	94	23.5	0
Davies, J.	4	9	94	23.5	0
Lord, J.	2	4	27	13.5	0
Diedrick, D.	4	6	18	4.5	1
Miller, R.	2	2	10	5.0	0
Grixby, D.	3	1	9	3.0	0
Newcombe, B.	4	4	3	8	0
Davis, J.	2	1	3	1.5	0
Collins, T.	1	2	2	2.0	0

### PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Crouch, E.	4	32-61-3	52.5	502	8	
Lord, J.	2	1-3-1	33.3	24	0	

### RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Davison, M.	4	10	191	19.1	47.8	2
Wistrom, T.	4	10	146	14.6	36.5	4
Newcombe, B.	4	6	96	16.0	24.0	0
Buckhalter, C.	4	2	43	21.5	10.8	1
Bowling, J.	4	2	25	12.5	6.2	1
Davies, J.	4	15	15	15.0	3.8	0
Goliday, A.	4	1	7	7.0	1.8	0
Alexander, D.	4	1	3	3.0	.8	0

### FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, J.	0	1	0	0

### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	17	730	42.9	49
Brown, J.	1	28	28.0	28

### DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Polk, C.	4	12	23	35	2-14	0
Shanle, S.	4	11	10	21	1-1	1-18
Stella, R.	4	13	10	23	3-14	0
Kaiser, L.	4	10	15	0	0	0
Craver, K.	4	7	10	17	1-9	0
Walker, J.	4	11	8	19	1-1	1-5
Booker,						

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# Guy 'The Fly'



***Pesky split end  
Ingles was a  
big threat for  
the Huskers,  
despite being  
just 5-8, 158  
pounds***

**By Mike Babcock**

**G**uy Ingles' close friends still call him "Fly."

Van Brownson "stuck that on me in 1969," Ingles said.

He and Brownson were Nebraska football teammates in 1969 and 1970. Ingles, who was a year older than Brownson, earned the nickname when he was a junior.

And it fit.

The 5-foot-8, 158-pound split end was a fly in the ointment for opponents. He led the team in receiving yards in 1969, with 463 on 30 receptions, and combined with wingback Johnny Rodgers to catch 69 passes for 1,268 yards and 15 touchdowns on the 1970 national championship team.

Ingles had 34 of the receptions for 603 yards and eight touchdowns.

"We were throwing a lot then," he said. "It was either hand the ball off or throw it. We were going to throw 20 to 25 times a game. We wanted to throw for 200 yards and rush for 250."

**Guy Ingles caught 74 passes for 1,157 yards and 11 touchdown in his three seasons (1968-70) as a split end at Nebraska.**

# The First 1

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Thirty years have passed since Nebraska won its first official national title. And during those 30 years, Nebraska has finished atop the national rankings four more times, including three from 1994 to 1997. As the 1970 season illustrates, championships can depend on luck as well as on preparation and design. In a 12-part series, Huskers Illustrated takes a game-by-game look at the 1970 season.

"Now they want to rush for 350 yards and throw for 100."

Tom Osborne, Coach Bob Devaney's offensive coordinator, shaped the passing philosophy that enabled Ingles to rank among Nebraska's most productive receivers.

Current Cornhusker split end Matt Davison moved ahead of him into third place on the career receptions list with two catches in the Notre Dame game, and Davison will soon surpass him, if that hasn't happened already, on the career receiving yards list. Ingles was third on that list, too.

Ingles hasn't been surprised by Davison's success. Quite the contrary. While watching Davison play for Tecumseh in the state high school tournament as a senior, Ingles told his wife Jeanette, "That guy right there is going to be the split end that goes by me. That guy's going to be the one."

Ingles works in the investment business in Omaha. But he was watching Davison with the discern-

## Game 4

### Nebraska 35, Minnesota 10

Oct. 3, 1970  
Memorial Stadium, Minneapolis

	Score	Time
<b>(First Quarter)</b>		
NU — Johnny Rodgers, 6-yd run (Paul Rogers kick)	7-0	10:39
M — Ernie Cook, 45-yd run (Clare kick)	7-7	7:09
NU — Jeff Kinney, 2-yd run (Rogers kick)	14-7	2:38
NU — Guy Ingles, 14-yd pass from Joe Orduna (Rogers kick)	21-7	1:50
<b>(Second Quarter)</b>		
M — Clare, 35-yd field goal	21-10	9:23
NU — Jerry Tagge, 1-yd run (Rogers kick)	28-10	5:22
<b>(Fourth Quarter)</b>		
NU — Ingles, 3-yd pass from Tagge (Rogers kick)	35-10	13:16



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ing eye of a football coach. After finishing his playing career at Nebraska, and following a brief tryout as a free agent with the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, he spent 11 years coaching.

He began as a Cornhusker graduate assistant, spent three seasons as head coach of Nebraska's freshman team — Frank Solich succeeded him in 1979 — and then served as an assistant to Jerry Moore at North Texas for one year and Monte Kiffin at North Carolina State for two years.

Ingles left North Carolina State a year before Kiffin and his staff were fired. "It was a wonderful staff, but it just wasn't the same as coaching with Tom (Osborne)," Ingles said.

His respect for Osborne, his position coach, is undiminished by the passing of time. The Hall of Fame coach was an offensive genius, according to Ingles. "By the time I was a senior, Tom was calling all the plays from the pressbox. He called every snap in 1971," said Ingles.

"I'd say from 1969 on, he called every offensive snap, until 1997. The passing offense and the audible sys-

tem were all him. It was a great audible system, but pretty rudimentary."

Osborne's approach to passing also was rudimentary compared to systems now. But it was innovative for its time, and it enabled Nebraska to rebound from 6-4 seasons in 1967 and 1968.

The Cornhuskers used a spread formation, with multiple receivers. I-back Jeff Kinney, a converted wingback who's No. 2 in career receptions, and fullback Dan Schneiss were threats to catch the ball out of the backfield, and they complemented Ingles, Rodgers and tight end Jerry List.

Including an Orange Bowl game victory against LSU, all five had 20 or more receptions in 1970. "If people tried to play the spread offense with a three-deep zone, we had them," Ingles said. "You couldn't double up on us with a three-deep zone. So we had them screwed up."

AstroTurf replaced the natural grass field at Memorial Stadium prior to the 1970 season, and Ingles recalls, vividly, the first day players were allowed on the new artificial surface.

"It was all done, but there were no stripes, no paint. It was just a big green carpet," he said. "I thought, 'This is pretty neat.' We all had new (turf) shoes. It was new enough that it was still pretty springy. I loved it. I went down and caught a few passes. 'That didn't feel too bad.' It felt like a million dollars."

"And it looked like the biggest green parking lot you've ever seen." Before the artificial surface was put down "it was a parking lot, just asphalt," he said.

The asphalt base contributed to the AstroTurf's providing a fast track.

"I just felt real quick on it," said Ingles. "It helped me."

Ingles was born in southern California and lived in New York before his family moved to Omaha prior to his entering the eighth grade. He didn't play organized football until he was a freshman at Westside High School. He stood 5-foot-5 and weighed 116 pounds at the time.

He came to Nebraska as a running back, the position he played on Westside's Class A state championship team his senior year. But his

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running back days were numbered.

He spent "not more than 15 minutes at the position" as a Cornhusker freshman, he said.

Playing at Nebraska "was a great time," he said. "Some of the stuff on campus about the Vietnam War wasn't, but it was a fun time. Probably 85 percent of the students went to games."

Memorial Stadium's capacity had been increased from 53,000 to 65,000 with the addition to the side sections of the north stands in 1966 and another 2,000 seats were added when a new pressbox with a guest section was built prior to the 1967 season, when Ingles was a freshman.

The appearance of Cornhusker football has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. But its essence hasn't. "It's stable, the same now as it was then," Ingles said. "I'm 50-years-old and I can walk in the door and feel the same place. There's not another place in America that's like it."

"It's been really, really fun to watch it keep going. I enjoy being a fan."

He also seems to enjoy being "Fly" to his close friends.

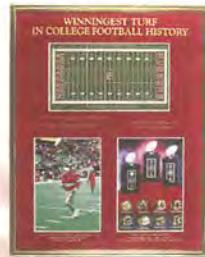
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# SIDE OUT

# Going Full Time

*Husker junior  
Kropp develops  
as all-around  
player*

**By Todd Henrichs**

**S**eemingly every time Jenny Kropp got started on the volleyball court a year ago, it was time to stop.

Kropp showed tremendous promise in her first full season as an NU starter in 1999, but as strictly a front-row player, her time on the court was limited.

Playing became almost a robotic experience for the middle blocker out of Grand Island Central Catholic. Three sideouts on the court, then three off. The cycle played out over and over again.

As a junior this season, Kropp is playing all the way around the court and enjoying the experience.

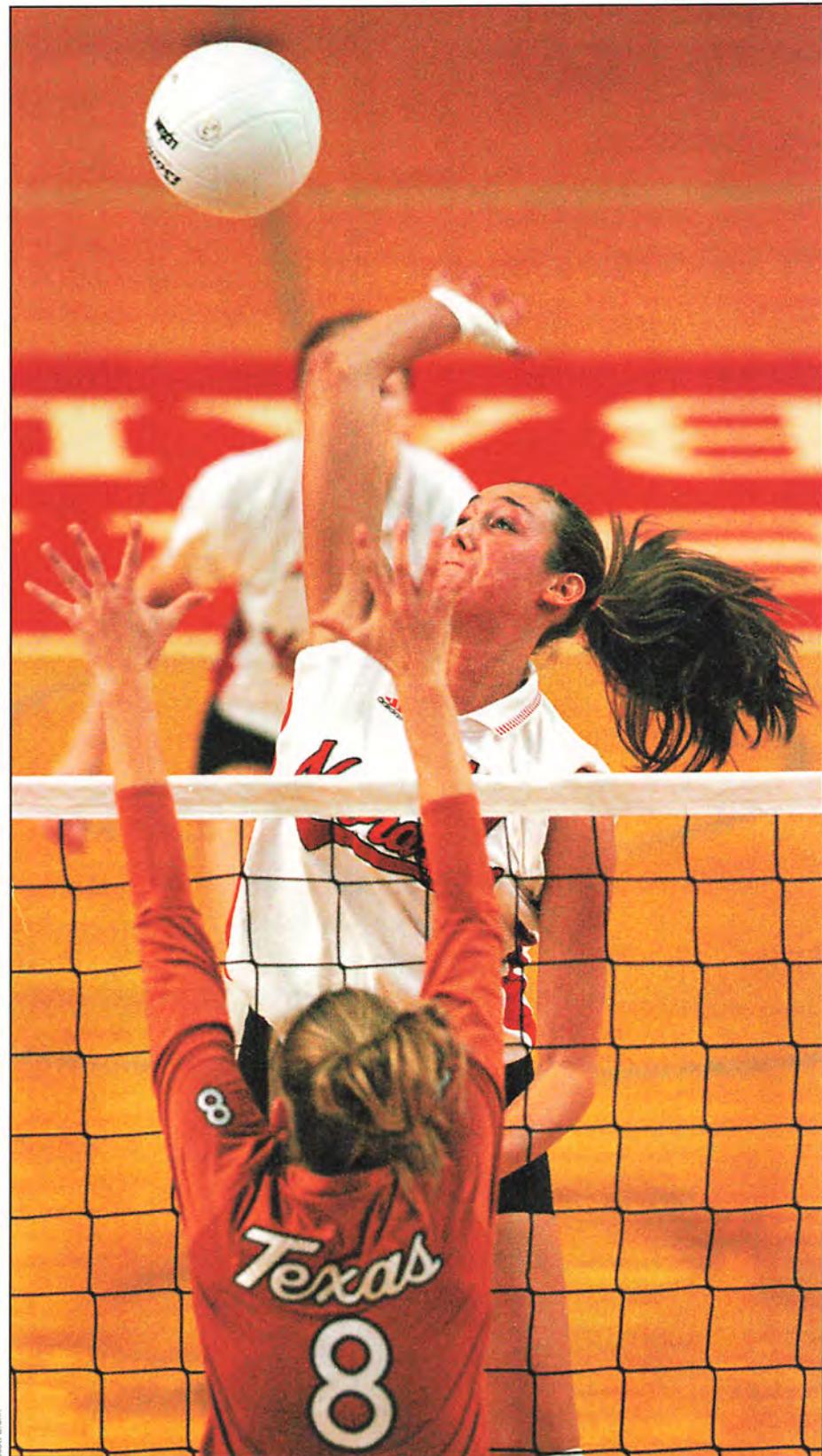
"It's definitely more fun when you can stay in and you don't have to come out and take a mental break," Kropp said. "You kind of lose that focus for that little time. It's easier to stay into the game when you're always in there."

The added responsibility for Kropp didn't just happen, however. Nebraska Coach John Cook certainly has his options in finding a defensive specialist to cover Kropp's time in the back row.

But thanks to a tremendous offseason that included the team's 18-day tour of China, Kropp established herself as a dependable passer with a hard-to-handle serve Cook was looking for.

Many believe defense is what will ultimately decide if Nebraska can remain a season-long contender for the national championship.

Jenny Kropp was just two digs shy of a triple-double in Nebraska's sweep of rival Texas in the Big 12 opener.



Scott Buhr

"It's a challenge," Kropp said. "It's something that I have to try to work at every day and challenge myself in practice."

"We probably spend a half an hour every day doing defensive drills."

Since taking over the program last December, Cook has made an improved defense his top goal. He's shown tapes of the 1995 NU national championship team to this year's Huskers, pointing out the level of defensive play needed to win it all.

Serving has been another point of emphasis ever since California-Santa Barbara eliminated the Huskers from last year's NCAA Tournament. The Gouchos did everything but serve Nebraska off the court.

"Now we have 10 minutes where everybody just serves in practice," Kropp said. "Last year, we never did that. That's partly why we're a way better serving team."

Nebraska's improved defense and serving this season had the Huskers unbeaten and ranked No. 1 two weeks into the Big 12 Conference season. Like the football team, they, too, will play at Iowa State this weekend.

In opening the season with 11 straight wins, the Huskers posted key non-conference victories against

Colorado State and UCLA. In Nebraska's sweep of rival Texas in the Big 12 opener, Kropp was just two digs shy of a triple-double. She produced a career-best 16 kills and hit .500.

Even before this season, Kropp had built a reputation for shining in NU's biggest matches. She had career highs last season against Texas A&M and Kansas State and served a critical ace against Florida in a rare serving appearance.

A year ago, Kropp averaged 1.94 kills a game with a hitting percentage of .275. This season, she was averaging 2.60 kills while raising her hitting mark to .351. Kropp led the Big 12 in blocking, averaging 1.69 blocks a game.

As a team, the Huskers have led the conference in blocking three of the past four years.

"For me, blocking sometimes is really nerve-wracking," Kropp said. "You usually don't know where the ball is going to go and they expect you to be there. If you're not, they're on your case."

Nebraska had very little else to complain about in the early part of its season. The Huskers dominated virtually every match.

NU has been especially effective in the opening games of matches, holding opponents to seven or fewer points in all nine wins.

Three times in its first nine matches, Nebraska scored 15-0 victories.

"They take care of business," Cook said. "It's a pretty boring group actually to be around. There's not a lot of talk involved."

Kropp couldn't say exactly why Cook called the Huskers boring but did venture a guess. She said the goals are the same as past NU teams but the focus among this year's group is unmatched.

"We all pretty much have one goal, one focus, and that's the Big 12 and national championships," Kropp said. "That was always the goal that we set, but this year I think there is more meaning behind it."

"We know that we can actually attain these goals. Last year that was our goal, but it was more of a dream rather than an attainable goal."

Kropp said the sense of unity she takes from this team is unlike any she has experienced going all the way back to her time in high school.

"We could all be best friends," Kropp said. "There is a connection out on the court I've never felt before." ■



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# GRIDRECRUITING

# Tight Ends Like Husker System

*Players realize they'd have to block at Nebraska*

**By James Hale**

**C**oaches always talk about consistency when referring to the Nebraska football team, but at the same time, in many cases, they talk about the Cornhuskers' willingness to change with the times.

This reference is made more with respect to the Nebraska defensive unit, but in reality, it can fit on both

## Nebraska Commitments for 2001

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Seppo Evvaraye	Laurel (Laurel-Concord), Neb.	6-5	323	DL/OL
Jared Helming	Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo.	6-4	270	DT
Richie Incognito	Glendale (Mountain Ridge), Ariz.	6-4	290	OL
Mike McLaughlin	Omaha (Millard North), Neb.	6-1	175	QB
Gary Pike	Pueblo (Centennial), Colo.	6-5	285	OL
Cory Ross	Denver (Thomas Jefferson), Colo.	5-9	182	DB/WR
Barrett Ruud	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-2	220	LB
Dan Stevenson	Barrington, Ill.	6-6	305	OL
Mike Stuntz	Council Bluffs (St. Albert), Iowa	6-2	180	QB

sides of the ball.

Nebraska became a more aggressive defensive team in the 1990s, and that move alone played a major role in

the surge Nebraska made from being a consistent top-15 team in college football to an elite top-five team. On offense, Nebraska is still running the

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# Hokies Get Another QB

option-I formation and still reaping the benefits of running option football and power-I football at the same time. This hasn't changed since the legendary Bob Devaney was ruling college football.

However, recently the Huskers have added a spread package to their offense, employing three wide receivers and when need be four. There have been games over the past couple of years where Nebraska threw the ball 30 times, which was unheard of back in the 70s and 80s.

Nebraska quarterbacks still have to be magicians at running the football, but now they must be able to throw the ball well and with confidence.

This fact alone has brought the tight end back in focus within the Nebraska offense. He still has to be a devastating blocker, but now he must be able to run and be a factor in the passing game.

Will Conwell (6-foot-5, 215 pounds and 4.7 speed in the 40-yard dash) of Cantwood, Wash., fits the prototype of what Nebraska is now looking for in a tight end. Conwell is a big man who has the frame to get bigger, and he can run. Conwell has been timed at 4.64 on several occasions but says he knows he can run a consistent 4.7.

"I have always had pretty good speed and coordination for my size," Conwell said. "I have really tried to develop my athletic ability the last couple of years and look forward to continuing that on the college level."

Conwell is noted more as a blocker on the high school level because he has been forced to play offensive tackle at times during both his sophomore and junior years. A three-year starter, Conwell was forced to play offensive tackle as a sophomore when both tackles were injured and played so well that he played there most of the season, even when the original starters returned. Last year, he split time at tight end and offensive tackle, depending on the injuries along the offensive line.

Now, finally, Conwell should play tight end this season. He prepared for the year at the Nebraska and Oregon State camps and believes he will prove that he can catch the ball this year. Conwell is an all-around athlete, winning the shot put and finishing third in the discus in his state, and he may want to participate in track in college.

Just where that may be remains to be seen. Conwell says he does not have a top five at the moment but admits that he is looking at Washington, Oregon, UCLA, Southern Cal, San Diego State, Nebraska and Tennessee.

"I like the environment down at Nebraska, and the football program is

another talented quarterback has cast his lot with Virginia Tech. Will Hunt (6-2, 205, 4.54) of Springdale, Ark., is a tremendous athlete who chose the Hokies over Nebraska, Tulsa and Rice.

"I think that Michael Vick is the best quarterback in the country, and they run an offense that takes advantage of his skills," Hunt said. "I am not saying I am Michael Vick, but I have pretty good speed, and the fact I am a run/pass quarterback I think fits in with what they want to do."

Texas picked up its 14th oral commitment, when blue-chip cornerback Aaron Ross (6-1, 185, 4.45) of Tyler (John Tyler), Texas, picked the Longhorns over Notre Dame, Texas A&M, LSU and Oklahoma.

"I really like Texas academically, and that was the deciding factor," Scott said. "They press their corners at the line of scrimmage, and that is when I am at my very best."

Oklahoma also added its fifth commitment from free safety/athlete Avery Shine (5-11, 180, 4.4) of Eufaula, Okla. Shine rushed for 1,700 yards and 19 touchdowns a year ago, but the Sooners plan to use him in the secondary.

— Nebraska has lost out on the top running back in the country. Kevin Jones (6-2, 200, 4.3) of Chester (Cardinal O'Hara), Pa., told Nebraska recently that he was eliminating it from consideration. Jones said the Nebraska coaches that he talked to told him that the Huskers would see him in a bowl game in two years.

Tennessee will get the first visit from Jones, and he is still looking at Virginia Tech and Penn State as well. Jones says all three schools are tied for No. 1 on his recruiting list.

— All-American running back Seymore Shaw (6-1, 208, 4.5) of Shawnee, Okla., now says he wants to take a trip to Nebraska. Shaw has been a consistent lean to Oklahoma or Oklahoma State but says that Nebraska is now very much in the picture, and he also has an interest in Arkansas and Texas A&M. ■

incredible," Conwell said. "The coaches are great people, and they treated all of us at camp very well. I am not really sure what Nebraska thinks of me. I know they want me to put on weight, but that will be no problem once I get into a college weight program like Nebraska's. I know Robin Miller, one of the tailbacks there, and we are pretty good friends. I have a great interest in Nebraska and I am waiting to see what they think of me."

Louis Lujuan (6-3, 250, 5.0) of Phoenix (Central) Ariz., is a talented big man who might grow into an offensive lineman. Lujuan put on 20 pounds during the offseason, which has made him a better blocker. He wasn't bad before, averaging a pancake block a game. This year, Lujuan says he is going to be more of a receiver. In his first two years, Lujuan caught a grand total of nine passes. However, through three games this season, he had nine catches for 170

yards. Lujuan attended both the Colorado NIKE camp and the USC mini-camp and also starts in basketball and baseball.

Lujuan is still weighing his options in recruiting, looking at Arizona and Arizona State, who have offered, while Colorado, USC and Nebraska are also showing some interest.

"I love the Nebraska program," Lujuan said. "They are the very best program in the country, and I would love to play for them. I am still waiting to hear what Nebraska wants to do with me."

Adam Whitehead (6-4, 225, 4.7) Portland (Grant), Ore., is one of the best pass receiving tight ends in the country. A two-time all-conference selection, Whitehead caught six touchdown passes a year ago and has two already this season.

Whitehead is leaning toward staying in-state at Oregon but would like to evaluate things at Nebraska,



## Still No. 1

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Washington, Michigan and Oregon State as well.

"It's no secret how great the Nebraska football program is," Whitehead said. "I am not sure there is a better program in the country. I am leaning toward staying in-state, but I can't pass up an opportunity to take a look at Nebraska and see for myself what their program is all about."

Brian Cutright (6-4, 210, 4.6) of Bettendorf, Iowa, caught 15 passes a year ago and scored three touchdowns. Also considered an excellent blocker, Cutright feels he would fit right into the Nebraska style of offense.

"I know that a tight end must be a blocker first at Nebraska, and that is what I do best," Cutright said. "I also have pretty good hands, and I seem to always get open. However, I love to knock guys off the line of scrimmage, and I know, in Nebraska's running game, that is a top priority for all their tight ends."

Cutright likes Iowa State, Nebraska, Army, Navy and Iowa.

Nebraska continues to work on Kellen Winslow Jr. (6-5, 215, 4.57) of

San Diego (Scripp Ranch), Calif. He is the son of the great Kellen Winslow, who is regarded as one of the greatest tight ends to play the game. The father played at Missouri and with San Diego of the NFL.

Kellen Jr. is built just like his dad, and many believe he has the same potential. Winslow is from Big 12 country and wouldn't mind coming back.

"My top two schools are UCLA and Texas, and I am still waiting for Texas to offer, but I think they will," Winslow said. "I am also looking at Michigan, Stanford, and Arizona State and Nebraska."

The Cardinal and Cornhuskers haven't offered yet, but I expect them to. I don't mind leaving California because I love Big 12 football. Nebraska is a powerhouse, and Texas is growing into one."

Tight end is another position where often the Cornhuskers will recruit a great athlete and then eventually place him here. However, Nebraska is recruiting some of the very best in the country and could soon make the position the feature target in the Big 12. ■

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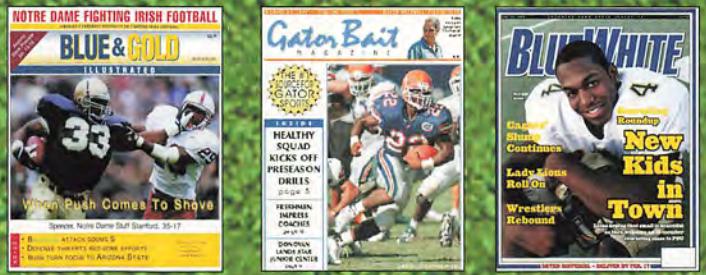
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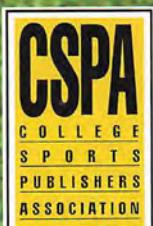
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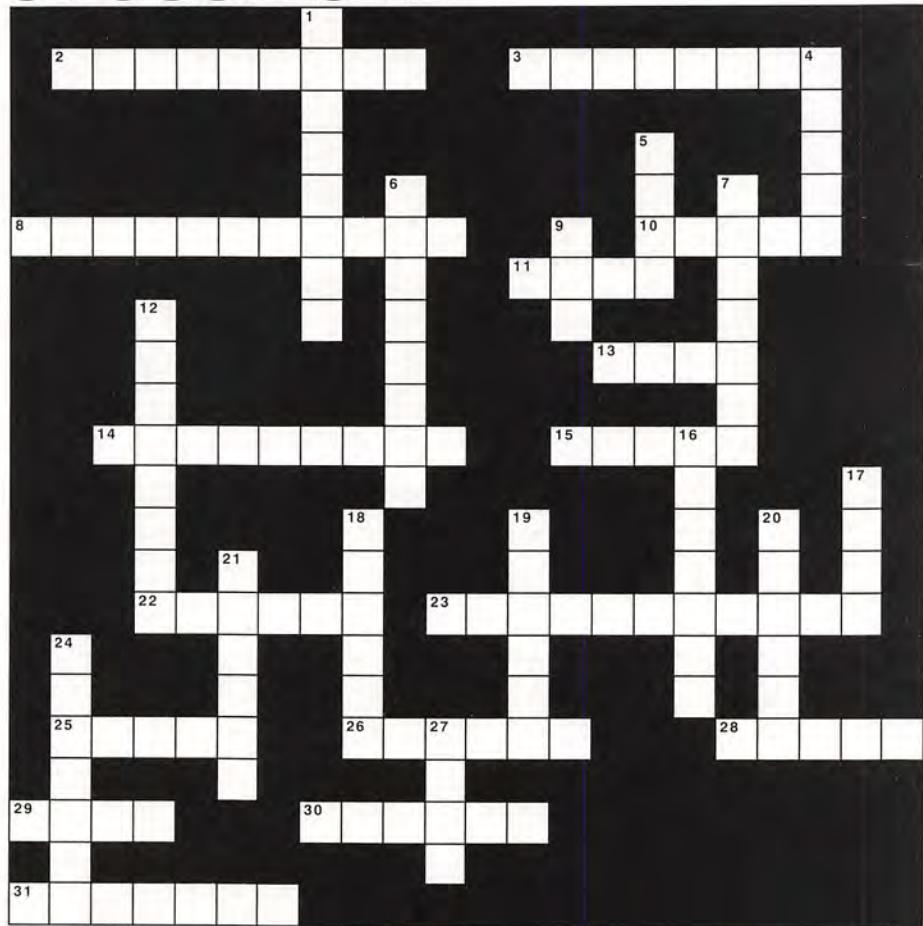
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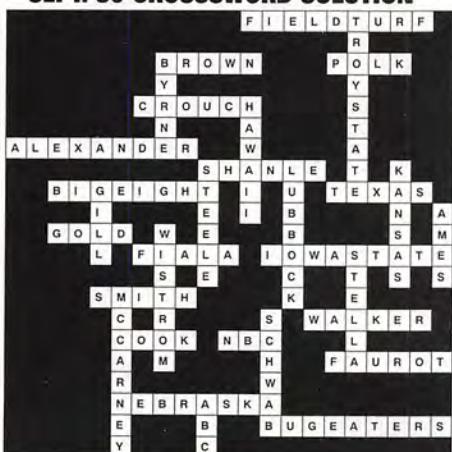
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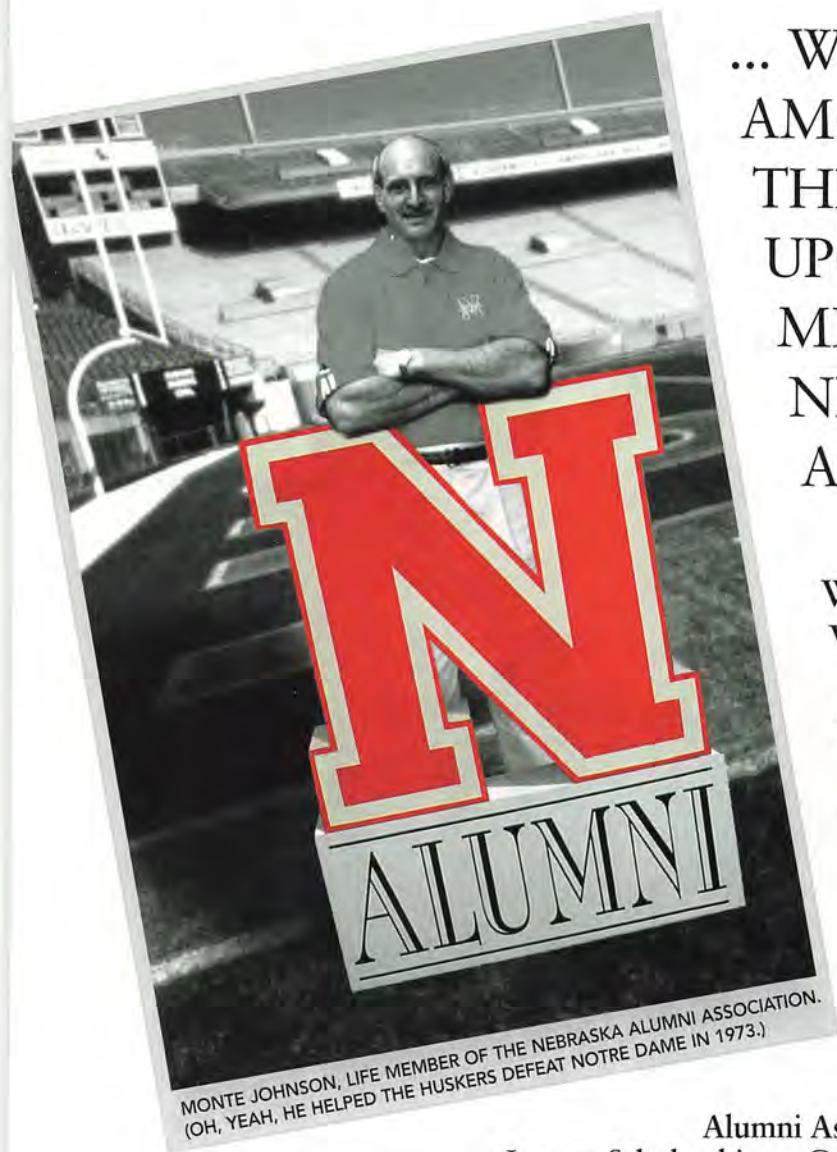
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# Alive And Well

**Reports of Crouch's demise  
were greatly exaggerated**



**Mike  
BABCOCK**

JERRY WEBER, Nebraska's head athletic trainer and physical therapist, passed a group of reporters at the end of the tunnel that runs from the football locker room and exits beneath the South Stadium.

"Now the whole state can take a deep breath," Weber said to no one in particular.

It was late afternoon Wednesday. And Weber's meaning wasn't lost on those in the tunnel.

Eric Crouch had returned to practice, after missing on Monday and Tuesday.

Not only that, Coach Frank Solich had been evasive in explaining his absence. When asked the reason for Crouch's being in sweat clothes on Monday, Solich replied, "Bumps and bruises."

He declined further explanation, even after Crouch returned. "Any time we have a guy I think will be out for an extended period of time, we will certainly identify the injury," he said. "But I really don't want to start identifying what's bothering a guy that's going to be back, and should be at full-speed."

That policy isn't limited to Crouch, of course. And it wasn't just instituted.

But Crouch's value to the No. 1-ranked Cornhuskers is such that his well being is of great concern. When left to the imagination, with an Internet-driven instantaneous dissemination of, in this case, misinformation, Solich's "bumps and bruises" were quickly transformed into catastrophe.

According to one rumor, Crouch suffered from a torn rotator cuff. In another, he was sidelined with a broken leg. Perhaps the most unusual bit of misinformation was that he had a crushed larynx.

That one was dispelled on Monday. Even though Crouch respectfully declined to discuss or further identify his injury on his way out the tunnel, he did say, "I'm fine, just a little sore."

So he wasn't without a voice. And his arms and legs certainly seemed to be attached.

The next day during the Cornhuskers' weekly news conference, Crouch elaborated, but only a little. "I'm not hurt," he said. "It's just the fact that the game (against Iowa) was physical, and I came out of there with a few bumps and bruises, feeling (them) pretty much all over."

"I just thought I should take some time off. Yesterday I decided to rest, and the coaches thought that was the best idea for me to do. And I did that. I feel pretty good right now."

"So it's not a case where it's anything serious."

Nevertheless, he missed practice again that day, undoing whatever good had been done by his appearance at the news conference. And Solich intensified the uneasiness.

That Crouch hadn't practiced was "a little bit of a concern

right now," he said.

Such was the dark cloud that hung over Nebraska leading up to the Missouri game. And the most skeptical fans probably didn't relax until Crouch ran onto the field for the first time.

The early-week drama involving the Cornhusker quarterback was small consolation to Missouri's defense. Any encouragement the Tigers might have had when Crouch fumbled the ball on the first play of Nebraska's second possession quickly collapsed under the weight of his running, and passing.

Crouch showed that his fancy passing against Iowa the previous week was no passing fancy. He completed 11-of-23 passes for 173 yards and two touchdowns against the Tigers.

The two touchdown passes give him eight for the season, a personal high.

He also was the game's leading rusher, with 110 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries.

"I think the one player that had the most effect on the game, other than Kirk Farmer, was Eric Crouch," said Missouri Coach Larry Smith. "I have a tremendous respect for him."

"I think he is a great young football player, and I think he will take Nebraska a long, long way."

Farmer, the Tigers' sophomore quarterback, kept them in the game, completing 13-of-25 passes for a career-high 214 yards and one touchdown and rushing for 83 yards on only nine carries. He left the game with what was diagnosed as a broken clavicle midway through the third quarter.

Crouch appeared to come through unscathed, despite the usual physical pounding.

The "bumps and bruises" that kept him out of practice for two days weren't in evidence against Missouri. And Nebraska Coach Frank Solich had no qualms about his 24 carries. "He's carried it more," Solich said. "I think you put the ball in his hands quite a bit in a game."

"If not, you think he's not being used enough."

Crouch certainly wasn't complaining.

"I like the carries," he said. "I'll carry it 35 times if I have to."

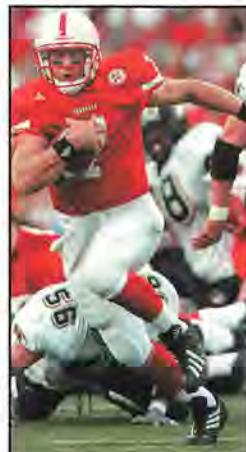
The stories on the Internet seemed laughable given his performance. "The rumors I can't control. I don't pay much attention to that. I think it just got out of hand a little bit," he said.

Even so, a reporter tried to get him to identify the specific injury.

"You're digging," Crouch said with a smile. "There were three or four parts (in) my lower extremities that were sore. That's just part of the game. I didn't miss a beat, really."

And he didn't plan to miss any practice after the Missouri game.

"I won't sit out this week," he said. ■



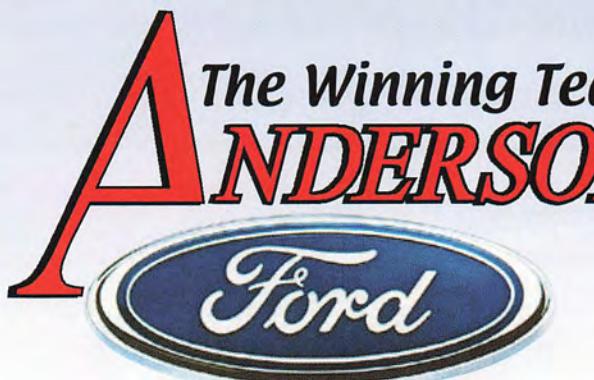
**Eric Crouch rushed 24 times for 110 yards against Missouri.**

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